

## BOLSHEVISM

BOLSHEVISM:  
THEORY AND PRACTICE

BY  
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## PREFACE

THIS book is intended to fulfil a threefold purpose. It will furnish a systematic account of Bolshevism, which will lay bare the principles underlying it, and depict it as a political ideal resting on a particular conception of man and the course of history. This is the first theme of my book. For this purpose it will be necessary to describe the historical and social conditions that made and make possible the rise, success, and development of Bolshevism. Bolshevism, therefore, as the ruler of the Soviet Union will be my second theme. And the union of both, the abstract and concrete presentations, will be the foundation of my third theme, an attempt to explain to my readers the history and creed of Bolshevism.

There can be no question of completeness. My aim is simply to depict the characteristic features of Bolshevism in clear and striking outline. For it is not my task to describe Russian life as it has been affected by Bolshevism or the institutions that Bolshevism has created, but to portray the distinctive characteristics of its government and the connection between its theory and practice. Whether I am justified in my hope that, as a consequence of the point of view adopted, this book will make its contribution to the study of Bolshevism, even after the countless descriptions of visits to the Soviet Republic and the numerous equally thorough and informative monographs—such, for example, as Pollock's study of the state-controlled industry, Just's study of the Press, and Dobbert's of finance—the reader alone can decide. I return my thanks at the outset for all information from whatever side it may have come. Much could only be



touched upon, much that is important is passed over entirely: problems of the first importance—for example, the financing of the Five-Year Plan—have been put on one side. In this book I have simply attempted to display Bolshevism as an organic whole, an active political and social force, not to describe the actual development of its government with the results it has achieved.

The entire work has been an attempt to understand Bolshevism as a historical phenomenon and criticise it from that standpoint. The criticism goes down to first principles, and shows how Bolshevik philosophy, its view of history and society, contradicts reality. It is because of this contradiction that the achievements of its government are not those which its theories would lead us to expect. It is not our concern to retail horrifying stories of Bolshevik failures, inhumanities and abortive experiments, but to expose its foundations.

Otherwise we can get no further than general denunciations of bureaucracy and terrorism; and to these the Bolsheviks can oppose the defects of bourgeois society—for example, the cruelties of its colonial policy. To avoid this meaningless debate we have attempted to show that the defects of Bolshevik practice are due precisely to the political and social theories of Bolshevism. The Bolshevik claim that the failures are the inevitable shortcomings of a period of transition, and as such will disappear, is false. On the contrary, they arise from the fundamental Bolshevik conceptions of society and human nature. A criticism of Bolshevism from the historical and social standpoint will enable us also to understand its historical significance. It avoids the mistake of treating it simply as a world-wide conspiracy, or an irrational tyranny. And for the very reason that the real place of Bolshevism in history does not harmonise with its own view of itself, it constitutes a peculiarly cogent refutation of its claims. The author

hopes that by this historical and social analysis of Bolshevism he will contribute to an understanding of contemporary political and social movements and theories. For there can be no question that Bolshevism has anticipated much that at this present juncture, when parliamentary government and the economic structure of the world are in a critical situation, has found expression in the novel formulas put forward by political theorists and publicists.

To take only two examples: Ernst Junger's pregnant formula 'total mobilisation' and Carl Schmitt's thesis of the trend towards the totalitarian state which no longer recognises the old nineteenth-century distinction between the state and society, have been already realised for years past in the Bolshevik Republic. The Bolshevik State is actually a totalitarian state which in principle refuses to recognise any sphere outside its competence. That the term 'totalitarian state' is of Fascist provenance does not affect this fact. The Fascist State is far and away less totalitarian than the Bolshevik. For the Concordat proves that, in theory at least, it does recognise a sphere, namely religion, whose content it makes no claim to determine. The Bolshevik totalitarian state, on the other hand, tolerates religious faith only as a matter of temporary expediency.

It is determined to be in all truth a totalitarian state, embracing and determining every province of human life. For it makes no difference in practice whether the subject of this totalitarian competence is society or the state. The abolition of all dualism between society and state renders the distinction meaningless, at any rate for those who, unlike the Bolsheviks, believe that politics is an 'eternal category' and that therefore to raise economics and a particular social class to the rank of all-determining substance and omnipotent power in the social body is merely to make them political.

Still more obvious is the 'total mobilisation' that Bolshevism achieves. It is precisely the dictatorship of the proletariat, subject as it is to no traditional limitations and restrained by no considerations of humanity, that has made it possible to find the meaning of life in the affirmation and expansion of that dictatorship, as a totalitarian state, theoretically a totalitarian society. The military terminology of the nationalised industry—its campaigns, brigades, shock troops of workers—proves that here military mobilisation for war is regarded as merely a special instance of a mobilisation embracing man's entire normal life, not as we regard it, something unique which breaks into and changes the normal routine.

I have deliberately refrained from investigating the many points of contact between Bolshevik political theories and the actual conditions of post-war Europe. But the reader will perhaps be able—for example when he reads my account of the Bolshevik opposition to opportunist Socialism—to turn his thoughts away from Lenin's doctrine of society and the proletariat to contemporary political movement. Even Lenin's strategy of 1917 and his conception of the party possess a significance far wider than this special Bolshevik and Russian application. But on the other hand we must not lose sight of the conditions peculiar to Russia. For the concrete reality cannot be exhausted by abstract conceptions, nor can politics ever neglect the actual situation. But political science and sociology must always be enriched by such violent experiments as Bolshevism and its government of the Soviet Union, even if in fact the Bolshevik experiment should prove the inherent limitation of all political theories. For Bolshevism shows the results of treating a political and social theory as absolute truth. Contrary to its own pre-suppositions it becomes inhuman.

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## INTRODUCTION

UNTIL 1917 the name Bolshevism was known only to those few experts who studied Russia and the Russian revolutionary movement. They alone were aware of the existence of a party of Bolsheviks which formed the left wing of the Russian Social Democrats. In November, 1917, the Bolsheviks got possession of the government of Russia. Since that date from a political party they have become a world power. Not only have they firmly planted their authority over the vast areas of the former Russian Empire, with the exception of Poland, Lithuania, and the Baltic states which, as the result of the War, have achieved autonomy; they have become a power which to-day threatens the entire world. Since 1917 the Socialist and proletarian world revolution has been transformed from a theoretical ideal into a political reality, since a great state stands behind it which entitles itself the first proletarian state in the world.

This proletarian state by its mere existence seeks to assist the world revolution. Its rulers do their utmost to prove that their activity is helping to give rise to a new Socialist order of society whose destiny it is to destroy the old bourgeois society; the more difficulties, industrial depressions and crises multiply in the world outside, the more do men's eyes turn to the Bolshevik state. It is the Mecca of those Socialist masses, disappointed by the compromise of their party with bourgeois society, to whom it is the pledge of victory. To all those who suffer under the present situation it appears as something new, the promise of a better future. Russia—once the backward



country—has become through Bolshevism the land which before all others is the land of the future. The impossible has become reality under our very eyes. The most conservative people in Europe is ruled by a government which breaks relentlessly with every tradition that stands in its path and dares to attempt to make it the most progressive people in the world. In the intention of the Bolsheviks Russia must become the country in which the masses determine their own destinies, and whose economic system is so organised that the exploiter has ceased to exist and the products of labour belong entirely to the workers. Society is to become the mistress of the economic system. The Bolshevik state claims to use its authority in the exclusive interest of the labouring masses.

This programme is apparently being carried out with the utmost vigour. We are constantly hearing of new schemes, of new economic experiments and revolutionary changes. We read of the nationalisation of the banks and foreign trade, of the socialisation of the factories, the collectivising of agriculture, and of the Five-Year Plan, intended to reorganise the entire social and economic life of a mighty nation embracing a sixth part of the earth's surface. And all this is bound up with a colossal propaganda, a polemic in which the supporters and opponents of Bolshevism grapple in bitter strife. It is, however, no merely theoretical controversy; the practical organisation of life and the destiny of mankind are at stake.

Not only in western Europe are there proletarian parties which take their orders and draw their strength from the Third International, the general staff of the world revolution founded by the Bolsheviks and having its centre in Moscow. The national movements in Asia, in China and India, in all the colonies, among the Negroes and Malays have derived new strength and new courage from the mere existence of a state in the service of the

world revolution. For this state combats all oppression and therefore also the oppression of the colonies and Asiatic peoples by the capitalist states. The proletarian state not only intends to be the organ of economic revolution; it also comes forward as the pioneer of political revolution throughout the world. Through it, therefore, that which hitherto seemed impossible seems to have become possible. The social revolutionaries who promise economic and political justice have seized the government of a vast empire, and maintain themselves in power without making any fundamental concessions. They continue to uphold their original programme. They claim to be able to do this because that programme is fundamentally the expression of the world's inevitable development. Therefore they are in a position to apply an elastic and pliable strategy without losing sight of their ultimate goal. Their opponents always regard their tactical retreats as a surrender of the programme of world revolution, and fail to perceive that they are but clever flanking manoeuvres. The Social Revolutionaries, the Bolsheviks, further claim that their programme alone corresponds with the true nature of man. Their work and government aim at setting him free from all the illusions and deceptions of which he has hitherto been made the victim in the interest of small self-seeking groups. Only the man who is exclusively interested in this world, in economics, and in society, is man as he should be. Religion, with its belief in a world beyond the grave, is among the powers which distract mankind from its tasks. Religion must therefore disappear, if a just order of society is to be made possible. So long as a religious belief which turns men's attention from this world continues to exist a just order of society will be unattainable. These revolutionaries, therefore, are not simply politicians satisfied with the possession of power. They regard themselves as bearers of a gospel which shall

bring to humanity the true redemption from its sufferings, the imperfections of its earthly existence.

It is precisely in this respect that Bolshevism is superior to the sceptical, relativist and purely opportunist political and social attitude so common in the outside world. It claims to represent immutable principles. Though it regards earthly existence, the economic and social organisation, as the final end of human life, it follows this belief with a zeal and devotion which give it the appearance of a religion, though naturally a false religion, in comparison with which the frequent panegyrics of man's spiritual freedom and dignity which carry with them no practical obligation appear worthless and hollow. It is, therefore, impossible to combat Bolshevism with arguments of a merely opportunist kind.

For the same reason no effective criticism of Bolshevism is possible which is content merely to catalogue its failures and fiascos. In reply it can appeal to its youth and point out that up to the present it has been in a stage of transition, by which it must learn and gather experience. Is it not by its own self-criticism that its worst failures are exposed? And it can appeal further to its own philosophy, according to whose tenets nothing in history can come into existence at a single stroke and in its full perfection. And to the imperfections with which it is charged it can oppose the shortcomings of the capitalist world. Is not, in fact, the world crisis in finance, with its results, the most successful propaganda for a political-economic system which, as is claimed for Bolshevism, avoids the mistakes of that which has existed hitherto? Is it not therefore favouring the growth of the world's first proletarian state, as in its day the political world crisis favoured its birth? Bolshevism is a reply to the defects of the present system, and it is therefore impossible to dispose of it by enumerating its failures.

If it is to be effectually fought, we must understand the fundamental principles of its gospel and its view of human nature. They must not, however, be presented as generalities divorced from concrete history. No doubt a description of the Bolshevik doctrines—for example, the Bolshevik view of religion, its materialism, its faith in the creative power of the masses and in the solution of all human problems by the right organisation of society—is extremely valuable. But this description must be given in its historical context. Otherwise it will be impossible to discover how it has happened that precisely these doctrines have become operative and successful in the world today. The question demands a preliminary distinction, which every account of Bolshevism must bear in mind—the distinction between Bolshevism as a specifically Russian phenomenon and as a phenomenon of universal significance. It is impossible to treat Bolshevism in abstraction from Russian traditions and history. Only in that context are its outlook and distinctive methods intelligible. On the other hand, we must not lose sight of its origin in western social theories, its Marxism. The historical delineation must therefore always be presented in the framework of the doctrinal system. History and doctrine must throw light on each other.

In this book the attempt will be made to depict Bolshevism above all as a Russian phenomenon. For up to the present it is in Russia alone that we have an example of its operation and development. Nevertheless, the book is not intended as a piece of Russian history. By employing the historical and social method of treatment it will attempt to provide grounds for judging Bolshevism in principle, not merely from the standpoint of a few isolated and external characteristics. Its purpose, therefore, is not to swell the literature describing the present conditions in Bolshevik Russia, the Union of Soviet Republics. Its

primary concern is not with Bolshevism as a political and social movement with particular historical effects, but to show what doctrines, what fundamental beliefs, and what corresponding social forms, organisations and apparatus of government underlie Bolshevik activities and propaganda.

For that very reason my account cannot be abstract and theoretical, consisting, for example, in a careful enumeration of the Bolshevik Marxian tenets. It must always set out from concrete historical and social facts. It is assuredly no accident that among the Socialists of western Europe those more or less avowedly revisionist groups have prevailed which are willing to co-operate with the bourgeoisie, and recognise more or less in good faith the existing order, whereas it was precisely in Russia that, revolutionary Marxism triumphed. It is also no accident, to take another example, that in Russia Socialist organisations of a unique character grew up, apart from which Bolshevism, in its present form, its machinery of government, and its distinctive methods of propaganda, are unintelligible. If we are to understand Bolshevism as it exists at present, the attempt must be made to comprehend clearly the relations between the theory and the social and historical situation which conditions it. Only then will the reader be in a position to understand political and social methods at first sight incomprehensible, no longer regarding them as the expression of a desire to retain possession of power and as devoid of any deeper theoretical basis, but distinguishing what is specifically Russian from what is universal in Bolshevism. The peculiar social situation to which the gospel of Bolshevism corresponds will then be apparent. Bolshevism will be recognised and seen in its historical significance, so that its claim to represent an inevitable historical development will thus be turned against itself. It is not the end of history, but

only a factor in history—like the French Revolution, which also believed it had introduced the future and final world order, but proved in reality the instrument of a particular historical and social rearrangement whose right in turn is already called in question. My account will therefore do justice to the historical effects of Bolshevism while at the same time criticising its fundamental principles and claims as false, limited, and the expression of a particular social situation.

This treatment, which, setting out from history, attempts to discover the theoretical and intellectual foundation of Bolshevism, its conception of man and society and their aims, has determined the plan of this book. My first task must be to describe the historical and social situation which constituted the background and presupposition of Bolshevism. In the first and introductory part of the book I shall therefore depict the old Russia with its political and social structure. In the second part I shall describe the peculiar situation which enabled the comparatively small group of Bolsheviks under Lenin's leadership to seize possession of power, and shall study the organisation of the Bolshevik governmental machine, the so-called dictatorship of the proletariat. In this connection I shall discuss the Bolshevik legislation on religion and marriage as attempts to influence society by state intervention. The third part will be devoted to the economic and social policy of the Bolsheviks, by which they seek to justify their occupation of political power as an approach to Socialism. The fourth part will describe the characteristics of the Bolshevik party and its leaders, which must be known if we are to understand the political and economic methods distinctive of Bolshevism. The fifth part will attempt to give a comprehensive presentation of Lenin's theories as a continuation of Marxism and to make clear their fundamental significance for the entire practical

activity of the Bolsheviks. In the sixth part I shall develop a criticism of Bolshevism, based upon its historical dependence on a distinctive social situation. I shall attempt to show that the achievements of its rule in Russia refute its claim to correspond with man's true nature.

## I

# THE HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL BACKGROUND OF BOLSHEVISM

### THE ABSOLUTE MONARCHY

THE old imperial Russia, the Russia of the Tsars, was an absolute monarchy.<sup>1</sup> This autocratic rule arose under the influence of the orthodox Christianity received from Byzantium and, above all, of the rule of the Tartars (1224-1480), which prevented the development of feudalism. The westernisation effected from above by Peter the Great cemented the edifice. Even the constitution set up by the ukase of October 1905 can only be regarded as a more or less external and superficial limitation of the autocracy. Max Weber truly denominated the system based upon it as 'sham constitutionalism,' for after its introduction, as before, the Tsar and a Government dependent solely on his good pleasure could decide all important questions independently without concerning themselves with the opinion of the popular assembly, the Duma.

The Russian monarchy developed out of the principality of Moscow. By successive conquests it had contrived to extend its dominion in the direction of western Europe and over a large part of Asia. Having cast off the Tartar yoke in 1480, the Moscow Tsar in 1552 conquered Kasan on the Volga. In 1667 and 1686 the Ukraine to the west of the Dnieper was annexed. The long war between Peter the Great and Sweden was concluded in 1721 by a peace which secured for Russia the greater portion of the Baltic



provinces. In the three partitions of Poland effected in 1772, 1793 and 1795 Russia received the lion's share. Five wars waged with Turkey between 1774 and 1878 led to extensions of territory. By the middle of the nineteenth century the conquest of the Caucasus had been finished. And the Russian dominion over Siberia, already secured in the sixteenth century, was completed in the nineteenth by the annexation of Central Asia and the extension of Russian rule to the Pacific.

Since the reign of Peter the Great in the eighteenth century the autocracy had adopted western methods of government and administration. The army was trained on the western model, a bureaucracy which copied the civil service of western Europe was created, and Russian society had in future to follow western usages. A European education was henceforward indispensable, because the civil service and the command of the army could not otherwise be carried on. But the adoption of western methods of administration did not involve the abandonment of the traditional basis of government. Since the reign of Nicholas I (1825-1856) its structure had been definitely fixed. The foundations of the Russian empire were admittedly the population of Great Russia, its traditional forms of administration the despotic monarchy and the Orthodox Church. Thus a rigid barrier had been erected against the political and social movements of western Europe, which had been unnecessary in the eighteenth century, when even in the West absolute monarchy was accepted as the natural form of government. In the name of national tradition every concession to the public opinion of the educated class was refused, parliamentary and constitutional government in all its forms rejected as un-Russian. Did not the common people themselves regard the Tsar as their protector against encroachments of the bureaucratic administration? Natur-

ally the Tsar—whose power was in theory unlimited—was not, in practice, omnipotent. Not only was he faced by the enormous host of civil servants, a bureaucracy whose complicated structure could not be demolished at a single blow, but, whether he would or no, he had also to take account of the traditional arrangement of society. The landed nobility, together with the passive peasantry and the conservative groups constituted by the petty bourgeoisie and the native Russian merchants, were regarded as the most reliable supporters of the crown. The diverse races and religions of the empire were not treated on an equal footing. The Government favoured by every means in its power the Great Russians and the Orthodox Church—they were in fact the national race and the national religion.

We must not, however, conclude that the autocracy was opposed to progress of any kind, and clung obstinately to every existing social form and arrangement. On the contrary, the Tsars considered it their task—as is shown most clearly by the westernisation effected by Peter the Great—to force necessary reforms upon an unwilling society. The emancipation of the serfs in 1861 would have been impossible without Tsar Alexander II, although the loss of the Crimean War against England and France, which had hastened to the assistance of Turkey, had clearly proved that the system of serfdom could no longer be maintained. The emancipation of the serfs was calculated to attach the peasantry, which possessed henceforward its place in the social hierarchy, more closely to the Tsar. For it displayed him as their liberator from a state of bondage. Did it not confirm the belief that it was not he who was responsible for their sufferings, but his bureaucratic advisers, who did not always tell him the truth?

## THE EDUCATED CLASS

The union between the professedly patriarchal Tsardom and an administrative machine constructed on a more or less western pattern could not tolerate any effective intervention of public opinion in the business of government. The government of the Tsars rested on the will of the man called by God to rule. He alone possessed the right to decide how far account must be taken of so-called public opinion and the wishes of particular social groups. When the influential position still held at the end of the eighteenth century by the foreign immigrants had become a thing of the past, the nobility, from whose ranks were drawn the heads of the civil service and the commanders of the army, alone constituted a well-defined group representative of the national tradition or, as in the case of the Baltic barons, bound to the monarch by a bond of personal loyalty. The educated class, on the contrary, did not inspire the same confidence. This was not affected by the fact that until the early decades of the nineteenth century it consisted primarily of nobles. Its entire mode of thought ran counter to the ideas on which the Russian monarchy rested. In the eighteenth century this was not yet recognised. The Empress Catherine II still coquetted with the leaders of the western *Aufklärung* and accepted their admiration as the model ruler, the Semiramis of the North. After the French Revolution, however, and above all after Alexander I, at first progressive in his tendencies, had decided to continue the traditional autocracy and renounced any fundamental reforms, the breach was inevitable between the educated class, with their western sympathies, and the Government. It found visible expression in the celebrated rising of the Decabrists in 1825. The conspirators—for the most part officers of noble

birth—attempted to take advantage of the disturbances which followed the death of Alexander I and the renunciation of the throne by his immediate successor, Constantine, to introduce a constitutional régime based more or less on western models. The rising failed—but it was a clear proof of the estrangement which had begun between an educated class steeped in western ideas and the ruling autocracy. To have prevented the estrangement would have required a second Peter the Great. But it was in fact the product of Peter's reforms. Peter the Great had pointed to the West as the great example. Why then should Russia not follow the West now that, after the French Revolution, it had abolished absolute monarchy, at least in theory? In the eighteenth century autocracy could appear perfectly compatible with western culture, with the acceptance of western methods and western customs. Was it still compatible after the French Revolution? On the other hand, it was difficult to found the Tsardom on an independent national basis, when western ideas and methods had once been introduced to support the traditional monarchy. Hence the governing régime was unable to achieve any living union with educated society, which began to question the foundations of political and social life.

The Government failed to understand that a western education must inevitably involve criticism of the Russian tradition and political system. It imagined that it could make use of education simply as means to an end—i.e. as an instrument for the maintenance of its authority. The moment education produced an independent intellectual movement which threatened to overstep the boundaries prescribed by the existing régime it must be kept within its proper limits. This attitude rested on the belief that the Government need take no account of projects which were not the fruit of practical experience and were based upon ideals out of harmony with the spirit of the Russian

people, to whom the traditional monarchy was far closer than these remote and alien thinkers, blinded and led astray by the spirit of the West.

Such an attitude led inevitably to the formation of a social stratum hostile, as a matter of course, to the existing régime, or at least without any direct relationship to it. This stratum was known in the old Russia as the intelligentsia.<sup>2</sup> It played a decisive part in preparing the overthrow of the monarchy. Its characteristic mental outlook is to a large extent still operative in Bolshevism—though transformed and distorted out of recognition. It could not, of course, effect a revolution by its sole resources, without the co-operation of a particular social situation which won for it the allegiance of the masses. But it supplied the propagandists and leaders of the revolution. It is therefore necessary, if we would understand the Russian revolution, to describe its development and peculiar characteristics.

The intelligentsia as a social group with a distinctive outlook and fundamental attitude could arise only after the Napoleonic wars, when the western spirit had finally penetrated the leading classes of Russian society. Even in the eighteenth century its forerunners had made their appearance. Individual Russian adherents of the Enlightenment were discontented with the existing conditions and demanded social reforms. Among their number Raditshev is particularly famous as the Father of the Intelligentsia; he demanded the abolition of serfdom and was therefore punished by the Government as a revolutionary. But the intelligentsia could only be constituted as a social group when Russia's peculiar position in the world gave rise to dissatisfaction and there was widespread criticism of her relationship with the West, whose technical methods and external civilisation she had adopted, while refusing to follow the western development of political social and intellectual life.

The attitude of the Government, which treated education as solely a means to its practical ends, could not be permanently satisfying. A conservative and national opposition, the so-called Slavophiles, which blamed the Government for its adoption of western institutions and opposed to it traditional Russian ideals, could only find response in a milieu whose social position was secure. The great body of the educated, who suffered from the restrictions imposed upon intellectual life and were in revolt against them, felt justified in attacking the existing régime as too little western. In their eyes it was in conflict with the ideas preached by the western liberals and revolutionaries; was an antiquated and uncivilised system. The criticism of feudalism and absolute monarchy made by western liberalism had been already applied to Russia by the first theorists of the intelligentsia—for example, by the critic Belinski under Nicholas I. This revolutionary criticism was adapted to the temper of the great mass of the educated who were without fixed possessions or social status, the so-called Rasnotschinzi, the sons of civil servants and men of various origins who, in virtue of their education, shared a common social position.

#### WESTERN CULTURE AND THE NATIONAL TRADITION

For these men, educated on western lines, the awakening of the intellectual life was bound up with opposition to the existing régime. For the absolute monarchy seemed at every turn to oppose barriers to its demand for intellectual independence. Was it not symbolic of this that the Tsar Nicholas I, for all his external favour, entirely failed to understand the national poet Pushkin and permitted him to remain in the straitened circumstances of a minor post at court which rendered his creative work more difficult? The memoirs of Herzen, who was born

in 1813 and emigrated later, and who, in the middle of the nineteenth century, passed as the typical Russian revolutionary, show how oppressively the existing system weighed on his youth. Nor was it otherwise with Bakunin, the celebrated anarchist and opponent of Karl Marx in the First International. As soon as the young officer began to be interested in contemporary philosophy he became a foe of the Government. That western education made young Russians hostile to the established social and political order as soon as they recognised it as something non-Russian, an importation from abroad, was not simply the inevitable result of the censorship and other repressive measures adopted by the autocracy; it was a natural consequence of the fact that this education was out of harmony with Russian traditions. An intellectual movement which penetrated into Russia from the West presented itself to the Russian as a complete novelty, and acted upon him like a revelation. It was therefore taken up with an enthusiasm which it never evoked among the nations with whom it originated. And it acted as a solvent for the very reason that it was welcomed with a credulous devotion, as if it were a new religion. The historical conditions were absent under which in the West the novel ideas, however revolutionary their forms of expression, were incorporated into the existing order. Their adherents therefore rejected the existing order root and branch.

Tschadaev had realised the perils for Russia which lurked in this western education when, in his famous philosophical essay published in 1837, he characterised the Russian as a traditionalist, and for the first time consciously raised the question of his distinctive historical vocation. Dostoievsky's work was dominated by this supreme problem, as is shown by his persistent struggle against the cosmopolitanism produced by western education and his appeal to the common people as model.

But the intelligentsia as a body were quite unconscious of this problem, the breach with national tradition as a result of western culture. They were content to accept western culture without questioning, and failed to perceive that the radicalism with which they accepted it gave it an unwestern content. They treated western culture as the decisive factor in life, the force which determined man's entire existence. Therefore a Government which stood in the way of its adoption inevitably appeared as evil, to be fought with every weapon, because it excluded the truth from Russia and prevented the creation of a just social order. It was due to this fundamental attitude that, for the intelligentsia, social and political questions were of primary importance. It was the inevitable result of regarding western culture as something absolute which moulded the whole of life. Whatever was in opposition to it, whatever did not harmonise with the ideas it inculcated, was *ipso facto* rejected and denied. And that was precisely the entire social and political system of Russia, which regarded education as from beginning to end simply a technical tool, the acquisition of an exterior civilisation. Hence the ideals of social equality and justice which were taken over from the West became the object of a religious fervour and were exploited against existing conditions. The revolutionary intelligentsia claimed—to quote the celebrated dictum of one of its exponents, Lavrov—to be a group of ethical and critical thinkers. As opposed to the self-seeking classes in possession of power and the philistines, who cared only for tangible success and for their careers, they rejected the existing political and social system in the name of truth and justice. Thereby they were fulfilling a moral vocation. Penetrated by a sense of the dignity and freedom of man, they demanded revolution as the indispensable condition of a life in harmony with human nature. This revolutionary idealism assumed the garb of the modern



radical theories then prevalent in western Europe. Even the Russian conservatives, the Slavophiles, supported their denial of the superiority of western culture over the national tradition by appealing to western philosophies, to the Romantics and Schelling. The revolutionary intelligentsia of western sympathies divested Hegel of his idealism; they were influenced alike by Spencer and French positivism. Though it would be of interest to show the modifications which western philosophies underwent at the hands of the Russian intelligentsia, we are concerned here only with their fundamental attitude. And this was the rejection of the existing social and political order—including the established Church, which was regarded as an unspiritual power and the ally of the State—and belief in the decisive importance of revolution.

#### THE INTELLIGENTSIA AND ITS ENVIRONMENT

The intelligentsia was confirmed in this attitude by constant conflicts with the social and political powers. Few had the courage to accept, like Dostoevsky, severe punishment without becoming revolutionaries for the rest of their lives. But we must not forget that the circle of active members of the intelligentsia was relatively small. Good society, educated society, was indeed in sympathy with its radicalism. But the sympathy was purely passive and theoretical, confined to a participation in the intellectual life of the West, and a more or less cautiously expressed demand for reform, for the assimilation by Russia of western civilisation, and her transformation into a constitutional state after the western model. On the other hand, we must not forget that the revolutionary movement could reckon upon the sympathies of the educated, however they might disapprove of the forms in which it found expression, or condemn its excesses.

The ideals of the intelligentsia, however, met with no response from the great mass of the population. At least this was the case during the first decades of its existence. To be sure, it appealed to the people; it claimed to be, so to speak, the voice of the masses oppressed and kept in ignorance by the Government. In this capacity many of its first representatives demanded completely justified and necessary reforms. This is particularly true of the struggle against serfdom. When Tsar Alexander II abolished serfdom he was influenced by reading the *Kolokol* (*The Clock*), an organ published in London by Herzen, a typical representative of the intelligentsia. But the intelligentsia was not satisfied with demanding necessary social reforms; it cherished a radicalism which deprived it of all sense of reality. Its western culture led it to reject national traditions *in toto*—a rejection which found typical expression in the materialist nihilism in which it finally issued. Nihilism first became a powerful influence in the sixties of the nineteenth century, when the German idealist philosophy represented by Schelling and Hegel, which had hitherto determined the outlook of the Russian youth, lost its hold. In his novel 'Fathers and Sons,' Turgenev depicted this nihilism in the figure of Basarov, a gross materialist who put natural science in the place of religion and for whom all spiritual ideals were discredited by the brutal realities of the struggle for existence. But this materialism and apotheosis of natural science were often combined, for example by Tschernyshevsky, with a typically idealist faith in the goodness of the people and in the perfectibility of human nature, if only it were emancipated from the external bondage in which it was held by the autocracy.

Of this attitude terrorism was born. Terrorism arose from the belief that only a few external measures were required in order to establish in Russia the reign of justice

and truth. It was accordingly believed that a few assassinations would suffice to overthrow the existing Government, or at least to inspire it with such fear that it would introduce the reforms which would set up in Russia a radical democracy. This terrorism, which began under Tsar Alexander II, the liberator of the serfs, and to which the Tsar himself fell victim, was typical of the gulf which divided the revolutionary intelligentsia from the masses. The intelligentsia could not possibly let loose a general insurrection; its propaganda had to be conducted by deceiving the people. Forged manifestos were circulated proclaiming a division of the land by the Tsar, and the popular belief in the Tsar's hostility to the bureaucracy which tricked him behind his back was exploited for all it was worth. But the people would have nothing to do with the revolutionaries, whom indeed they could not even understand. There was nothing left but the formation of small active groups. When terrorism had proved its inefficacy, and it became evident that even the assassination of the Tsar did not effect the downfall of the Government, it yielded once more to peaceable attempts to educate the masses. This propaganda was a further witness to the alienation of the intelligentsia from the people. The latter had to be educated artificially to its demands.

It cannot, therefore, be maintained that the revolutionary movement in Russia arose spontaneously as a mass movement. It arose in a social milieu which a western education had rendered hostile to the national traditions and to which the existing régime gave no scope for the independent practical action it longed to exercise. Consequently it lived in a world of theory divorced from actuality; its thought became a construction of Utopias. It demanded of reality what reality could not give, an impossibility concealed from its vision by its very divorce from the facts; in particular, fantastic notions of the people were

fostered. This was proved, not only by the expectation that a few reforms and the overthrow of the established Government would suffice to emancipate the masses from the ignorance in which they had been plunged hitherto, but also by the belief that the Russian peasant was peculiarly predisposed to accept Communism. This belief, prevalent in the revolutionary movement since Herzen, strongly influenced the terrorists under Alexander II, the group whose watchword was '*Semlja i Wolja*'—'Earth and Freedom.' To justify this belief appeal was made to the fact that as a result of the constant redistribution of the communal fields individual proprietorship of land permanently set apart had not developed in Russia. The introduction of Socialist ideas among the people was therefore expected to produce marvellous results. For although they had been imported from western Europe they were believed to correspond with Russian conditions. The people was regarded as a naturally Socialist people.<sup>3</sup>

#### THE MENTALITY OF THE INTELLENTSIA

A revolutionary propaganda based on Utopian pre-suppositions could not, of course, exercise a wide appeal. It could only reach a small circle, where it found expression in the most radical forms, in methods of terrorism, assassinations of high officials, generals, the Tsar. But we must not therefore underrate its significance. It fostered a disposition to make the intellectual life a political weapon; that is to say, as the result of its influence, culture appeared synonymous with the determination to effect a social-political revolution. It revealed the irrationality of the existing régime, which could only oppose to the revolutionary movement the fact of its existence, but was incapable of giving birth to an intellectual movement in the opposite direction. The revolutionary movement involved the

danger, proved by the participation in the terrorist assassinations under Alexander II of men of popular origin, that those elements of the people which rose into the ranks of the educated would be prejudiced from the outset against the existing Government. Above all, it produced and fostered an intellectual outlook which extended far beyond the circle of its immediate adherents, according to which the autocracy was responsible for keeping Russia a backward country, since, although it had accepted to some extent the mentality of the West, it refused to base its policy and administration on western principles.

Above all, the political colour given to all culture must be regarded as decisive for the future development of Russia. For it fostered a type of man characterised by a distinctively practical temper. Politics seemed an absolute value and, moreover, an absolute value which must be realised by revolution. However little the intelligentsia with its western enlightenment suspected the fact, this belief harmonised with a peculiarly Russian quality, the tendency to extremes. The Russian is inclined to push an idea to its furthest consequences and carry it into practice without any regard to its partial character and its relation to the real situation.

Politics therefore—and, moreover, politics as the belief in the necessity of revolution—became an all-powerful and exclusive creed. Already the terrorists had clearly shown to what this idolatry of politics must lead. At first it derived its momentum from considerations of an ethical and cultural character. The existing Government was regarded as an immoral Government, out of harmony with the state of science and education, and therefore—as its alliance with the Church, that stronghold of superstition, proved—based on falsehood, on preventing the general acceptance and propagation of the truth. But this ethical

starting-point led paradoxically to the exclusion of morality from the political struggle. Netchaiev, Bakunin's disciple, did not shrink from murder when it was a question of securing the solidarity of the revolutionary groups, an episode on which Dostoievsky based his novel 'The Possessed,' written to combat the revolutionary mentality. In the name of morality and justice the terrorists committed murder.

As a result of this acclamation of politics as the power which determines and fills the whole of life, a product of the opposition to a system of government hostile to the intellectual life, revolution and its political goal came to be regarded as an end in itself, and to this end everything else had to be subservient. Men no longer asked what means might rightly be employed to attain it, for every means seemed justified. The Government was denounced as resting on brute force, but no objection was taken to the use of force against it. For the revolutionaries had ceased to perceive that they too were appealing to brute force in attempting to force a particular belief on all their fellows—so powerful was the influence of the end they had in view. The end seemed to justify all means. The only thing that mattered was to achieve this political end and bring about the revolution. Revolution is good and necessary; such was the fundamental article of their creed, on which everything else depended. Henceforward no hesitation, no restraining considerations, no regard for reality. For reality did not judge theory, but theory reality.

The measures adopted by the Government did nothing to wean the intelligentsia from this political radicalism. For the exclusion of the intelligentsia from public life gave it no opportunity of testing its theory in the light of facts. It remained isolated from Russian life, the life of the people. Persecution invested it with a halo of oppression, which even in its own eyes appeared to establish the

all-importance and unselfishness of its radical politics. Did not the severe sentences passed upon its adherents, for example deportation to Siberia, prove that it represented the cause of freedom and justice against a system of injustice and arbitrary government? Further, the defects of the administration, the failures of the bureaucracy and the scandalous exposures of bribery were a powerful propaganda in its favour. They seemed a decisive proof of the complete unfitness of the existing Government to rule.

The intelligentsia may be regarded as an expression of the cleavage which had existed ever since Peter the Great between the theoretical foundations of the existing system and its methods of government, a cleavage which it plainly revealed. Its revolutionary attitude, typical though it was of this cleavage, could not become dangerous to the Government so long as the latter was capable of determining the social development of the empire as a whole without any considerable external upheavals. The intelligentsia was for a long time a staff of officers without privates. It was the incapacity of the autocracy to cope with the political and social questions that arose which first supplied the hitherto missing link between the revolutionary leaders and theorists and the masses, and thus made them men who began to count even in practical politics.

#### THE SUBJECT RACES AS HELPERS OF THE REVOLUTION

As we should expect, the revolutionary forces found supporters in the foreign races who suffered under the existing Government. Of these the Poles were a typical example. Herzen had already allied himself with the Polish nationalists. It is significant that the present Polish dictator, Pilsudski, entertained in youth close relations with the Russian revolutionaries. A considerable section

of the Polish revolutionaries, even of the Socialists, were primarily nationalists, and fought in the first place for the liberation of their country. Nevertheless, even Poles have given their adherence to the radical revolutionary movement for its own sake. Among the Bolsheviks Dzerzhinsky and Menschinsky, presidents of the terrorists institutions set up to repress the counter-revolution, the Cheka and the Ogpu, are of Polish nationality. The fact that until 1905 the Ukraine had no official existence for the Russian Government—publications in the Ukrainian language were forbidden—made the Ukrainian intellectuals trusty allies of the revolutionary element. A Ukrainian intellectual, if he would remain a Ukrainian, must become a revolutionary. Nor must we forget the Georgians and Armenians, who play a distinctive part in the history of the Russian revolutionary movement. The propaganda of the Social Democrats was particularly successful among the Georgians. Among Bolsheviks and Mensheviks alike Georgians held and hold leading positions. We have only to mention among the Bolsheviks Stalin-Dhugaschvili, the present president of the Council of People's Commissars; Ordchonikidse; and the secretary of the Executive Committee, Enukidse; and among the Mensheviks, Tscheidse and Zeretelli. After the revolution of March 1917, Tscheidse was president of the executive committee of the Workers' and Soldiers' Councils, Zeretelli, the Socialist who advocated most warmly alliance with the bourgeoisie.

But of all the foreign nationalities the Jews took the most active part in all the revolutionary movements. Even more than the Russian intelligentsia, they were debarred from every social and political activity. The special legislation to which they were subject confined them to certain localities. It was only in particular districts of western Russia that they could dwell without a special



permit. Moreover, their appetite for education was restricted by the system of a *numerus clausus* for Jews at the higher educational institutes and the universities. For the Jews—that is, for the younger generation which, no longer satisfied with the position of tradesmen, handicraftsmen and hucksters, demanded a leading part in public life—revolution was a movement of national liberation, whether in their theoretical internationalism they were themselves aware of it or not. Before the war the Jews enjoyed the particular sympathy of the Russian intelligentsia, because they were looked upon as a symbol of the injustices of the established régime. The anti-Semitism officially encouraged was regarded by the radical intelligentsia as a manoeuvre of the Government to distract attention from its own shortcomings by an appeal to the ignorance of the uneducated masses.

It is typical of the bond between the Jewish movement for national emancipation and the revolution that a distinctively Jewish Socialist party came into existence very early in the little Jewish settlements, a party distinguished by its particularly strict nationalism, which came into collision with the main body of Russian Socialists by its attempts to found everywhere separate Jewish Socialist groups. This party, for a long while inclined to Menshevism rather than to Bolshevism, has joined the Bolsheviks under the Soviet Government. Jews, however, play an active part in all revolutionary groups and parties. It is untrue to say that they are only to be found among the Bolsheviks. There were a great many Jews among the Social Revolutionaries condemned by the Bolsheviks in 1922, and of the Mensheviks tried by the revolutionary tribunal in March 1931 the majority were of Jewish origin. They are to be found alike among the Marxist and non-Marxist sections. Martov-Zederbaum is a prominent Marxian Menshevik, Gotz was among the founders of the

anti-Marxian Social Revolutionaries. Dora Kaplan, the Social Revolutionary, attempted to assassinate and actually wounded Lenin; Kannengieser shot the first president of the Petrograd Cheka, the Jewish Bolshevik Uritzky. Of the Bolsheviks, Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Litvinov, and Sverdlov—to take only leaders—are of Jewish nationality. That the participation of the Jews in public life increased enormously after the Revolution is explained by the important part in the revolutionary movement played by the Jewish intelligentsia. And although the number of Jews occupying leading positions in the Bolshevik party has been restricted by the policy of Stalin, in the middle posts of the official hierarchy it is still very largely represented.

#### THE MIDDLE CLASS

The participation of the subject peoples could not by itself have sufficed to constitute the revolutionary movement an internal power dangerous to the Tsardom. Moreover, the Government took their hostility for granted as a matter of course. It never dreamt of regarding them as entitled to equal rights. Though in the German Baltic nobility the Tsar possessed his most loyal servants, he considered himself, notwithstanding, as a Russian, or more strictly a Great Russian, ruler. Therefore only a revolutionary movement which awoke a response among the Russian masses could endanger his throne. We must not forget that as the nineteenth century proceeded the revolutionary Russian intelligentsia secured more and more avenues for its propaganda in consequence of the social changes which took place. Revolution, from the dream of a small circle of intellectuals, seemed to have become a political and social necessity. In the first place we must regard as representative of this development the growth of a liberal

bourgeois society in sympathy with the revolutionary intelligentsia. It did not seriously believe in the radical Socialist ideals, but it was dissatisfied with the backwardness of the Tsardom. Above all, it chafed against the rule of a cumbrous, slow-moving bureaucracy which hampered its business. Russia must no longer remain a backward state, ruled by a Government hostile to culture. This was its fundamental tenet.

The social basis of this society was no longer, as it had been in the first half of the seventeenth century, a group of noble landowners who reflected about their position and, like Tolstoy, regarded its privileges as unjust and immoral, though examples of this type of noble were still to be found among the liberalising circles of the local self-governing units, the Zemstvos; but it had been built up by the penetration of modern industry into Russia since the eighties <sup>4</sup> Side by side with the representatives and agents of this capitalist development were to be found doctrinaire admirers of western Europe, professors who were hostile to the Asiatic features of the Government, and criticised them radically.

The public opinion which grew up in these circles was strengthened and supported in the consciousness of its mission by the echo which the Russian revolutionary movement produced in the West. Its attitude towards the Government was uncompromisingly hostile, though its exponents—in contrast to the revolutionary intellectuals, who were more or less outside middle-class life, men of letters, students and the like—occupied secure positions in bourgeois society. It regarded itself as representing good society, the so-called Obchestvo, which more or less openly attacked the barbarities and incompetence of the Government, read with pleasure the books banned by the censorship but secretly circulated, and considered itself as educated Russia, as opposed to the Russia of Government

circles. It was in this milieu that the judicial system, in spite of the reform of the judicature carried out by Alexander II, was denounced as inefficient and corrupt, and therefore affording no security for the administration of justice. It was these representatives of the middle class who demanded a liberal and bourgeois constitution, as in harmony with the state of contemporary civilisation, which would guarantee the rights of the individual, popular representation and a parliament on the British model. The radical terrorists could reckon here on human understanding and a mild sympathy. Their deeds no doubt were unjustified, and it must be admitted that the young students were as a body far too radical in their views. But were not these the natural consequences of an Asiatic system of government which refused to permit free discussion, and instead of finding room in the national life for the idealism of youth, by brutal repression forced it into channels that were perhaps mistaken? That the guilt is not with the murderer, but with his victim, expresses the attitude of educated society towards the assassinations and attempted assassinations of high Tsarist officials of which the closing years of the nineteenth century witnessed a recrudescence. In the eighties Vera Sassulitch, the murderess of the head of the St. Petersburg police, was acquitted by the jury. Assassinations were regarded as the inevitable result of outrages upon human dignity, a response to the violation of human personality by the Government.

Even today it is not easy to form an accurate picture of the sympathy felt by middle-class society for the radical revolutionaries. It found expression at times in a doubt of its own social position. For example, among the financial patrons of the Bolshevik party, when it was first founded, was the manufacturer Sava Morosov, as the Bolshevik diplomatist Krassin relates in his memoirs.<sup>5</sup> But we must not forget in this connection that the bourgeoisie often

failed to take the revolutionary propaganda seriously. Its sole concern was to replace a system which was inimical to modern progress by a system of freedom. And the need felt by developing capitalism for unfettered expansion also played a very considerable part. This new capitalism was in many respects so remote from feudal and patriarchal ideas and the agents of the established Government, who were indeed often without the least understanding of modern economics, that it regarded the revolutionary movement simply as a struggle for emancipation from an oppressive external yoke and entirely overlooked its positive Socialist aims.

#### THE PEASANTS

The established Government cannot be said to have shown much concern for the so-called bourgeois class, even if on occasion for mercantilistic motives it favoured the growth of Russian industry by a high protective tariff, subsidies, and the like. Generally speaking, it cherished an agrarian policy. After the landowning nobility the peasant masses were regarded as the most reliable support of the throne. It was this which made the emancipation of the serfs so difficult to carry out. On the one hand the landlord's right to his property had to be safeguarded, on the other the peasants had to be satisfied. The peasants, the emancipated serfs, were therefore required to purchase their holdings—they were assigned some 34 per cent. of the land with the option of adding another 7 per cent. by further purchase up to 1905—by a series of compensatory payments spread over several decades until 1905.

The peasantry occupied a peculiar position in the state.<sup>6</sup> It possessed, we may almost say, an organisation of its own apart from the state, which so far as possible avoided any interference with its everyday life. Judicial authority

was largely exercised by the authorities of the village ; the village community could not only punish offending members—flogging was a recognised penalty—but expel them, even banish them to Siberia. Generally speaking, the community was the supreme authority over the individual peasant. There was no individual ownership of land, and the community land was constantly redistributed. Therefore traditional and antiquated methods of cultivation were employed. The soil constantly changed its cultivators. The very fact that assignments of land accompanied the emancipation of the serfs had confirmed the peasantry in a belief, already widespread, that in strict right all the land belonged to them. Periodical famines fostered this belief. Nor was it destroyed by the fact that more and more land passed by purchase from the possession of the landowners into the hands of the peasants. This attitude provided a handle for revolutionary insurrections, since it was impossible for the Government to sacrifice the landowners to the peasantry. In this connection it is significant that a scheme of radical agrarian reforms which provided for a partial expropriation of the landowners without compensation in favour of the peasants led immediately in 1906 to the fall of Kutler, the Minister of Agriculture, in spite of the fact that the pressure of revolutionary unrest among the peasantry was at the moment particularly strong.

The special organisation of the peasantry cut it off from the national life and rendered it immune from the dangers of a radical agitation. Only pressing poverty could drive the peasants to revolt. Otherwise a thoroughly passive attitude prevailed. The Government was regarded as a fact to be accepted, the Church was among the institutions which regulated and hallowed life, though on occasion a certain hostility might be displayed towards the inferior clergy, whose scanty stipends forced them to rely on the

offerings of the peasants. Since in the opinion of the peasants their distress was due to the unjust distribution of the land, the belief grew up among them that the Tsar would one day complete the emancipation of the serfs by giving them the entire land. The peasantry therefore had to be artificially stimulated into revolution, and it was a slow and difficult task to convince them of the blessings of civilisation. This propaganda the intelligentsia regarded as their duty, as is shown by their appeal to the people in the celebrated movement of the seventies. Intellectuals at that time went to the peasantry as village notaries, teachers, doctors, to get to know them, and above all to raise their standard of living. One of the chief complaints against the Government was that it did nothing to remedy the lack of education and barbarism of the peasants, but deliberately regarded popular ignorance as its surest foundation. The Zemstvos, the organs of local self-government of which Russian liberalism was particularly proud, considered it their most urgent duty to raise the level of civilisation among the peasants by erecting schools, hospitals and the like.

The importance of agriculture in Russia is evident from the fact that of the 170 millions which constituted the country's population in 1914 18.3 per cent. were urban, 81.7 per cent. lived on the land. In 1914 only three million were engaged in industry. The peasants who immigrated into the cities remained until the establishment of the pseudo-constitutional Government juridically members of the village community—e.g. for passport purposes, and in liability with their fellows for the tax levied on the community—although, since they were no longer counted as members of a family in possession of a farm, they received no share in its distribution of land. This often led to absurd anomalies. Schapovalov, for example, relates in his memoirs that a workman regularly

had his son flogged by the communal authorities of his village for alleged disobedience. Therefore, as Hoetzsch points out, the communal organisation of the villages was powerless to prevent the growth of a landless proletariat. We must also bear in mind that it was equally powerless to prevent the division of the peasantry into classes, and the formation of a body of wealthy peasants, the Kulaks, who oppressed their poorer fellows. In 1861 the land to be allotted was divided into farms in accordance with the number of families. The portions allotted to individual farms could be increased by passing over families without adult members capable of work or by confiscating farms whose owners were in arrear with the payment of their land dues, tax or purchase price. The peasants' share of the soil steadily increased by purchase from the landowners. But this also assisted the growth of class distinctions within the village community and favoured the wealthy peasants. But the risk of a redistribution of land by the community, in spite of legal restriction a grave threat, hindered the introduction of modern methods of cultivation, so that the yield of the land in peasant proprietorship was less before the war than the yield of the landowners' estates, on which modern methods were in use.<sup>7</sup>

#### THE PROLETARIAT

In Russia the industrial proletariat was, until very recently, more closely connected with the village than in western Europe. For that reason, like the peasantry, it was not easily converted to revolution. Its ranks were chiefly recruited from the superfluous sons of peasants, who, however—on account of the peculiar organisation of the village—remained, on paper at least, members of the village communities. They were often seasonal labourers, who in times of unemployment went back to their village.



It was indeed only some special economic stress that drove them into the factory at all. Only by slow degrees did the needs of modern industry which had developed continuously ever since the eighties, produce a class of labourers comparable with the proletariat of western Europe. It had no roots in any distinctive social tradition, its labour constituted its entire spiritual and material possessions.

The smattering of education which technical needs rendered indispensable in the foremen and managers aroused social discontent and indignation at the contemptuous treatment received from the bureaucracy. This was increased by the shameless exploitation of the workmen which characterised Russian capitalism, as it marked the initial stages of capitalism in every country. Unrestricted hours of labour, miserable pay, the over-strict discipline which was necessitated by the lack of self-restraint among the masses but led to intolerable wage-reductions, unendurable housing conditions—these were a matter of course. Here lay possibilities for a close organisation of the permanently disaffected. But that discontent had first to be freed from faith in the traditional government, and this was no easy task.

Just as the peasants expected from the Tsar a distribution of land, so the workman widely believed that he would be their protector against exploitation by the employers. The latter were not everywhere so prudent as several of their Moscow colleagues, who of their own accord made concessions to their men. Hence, even after the spread of Socialist propaganda to the proletariat at the end of the nineties, a workers' movement could be organised and abetted by the police. It is usually called the Subatovchina, after the agent of police who did most to encourage it. It was that bloody Sunday of January, 1905—when the bungling Government, mistaking simple faith in a patriarchal Tsar for a revolutionary insurrection, ordered

the troops to fire on the workers of Petersburg as they came with petitions to the Winter Palace—which finally destroyed in wide circles of the proletariat the belief that the established Government represented the cause of the people. The reminiscences of the Bolshevik workman Schapovalov, who was born in 1861, the year of the emancipation of the serfs, is an eloquent proof of how difficult it was to wean the working class from its traditional beliefs. As a young man Schapovalov attempted at first to satisfy his spiritual needs in a religious association belonging to the Orthodox Church. The lack of sympathy for the social and political needs of the people shown by the representatives of the Church and the close union between the Church and the ruling bureaucracy first drove him into the revolutionary camp. It was the intelligentsia, as Schapovalov's reminiscences clearly prove, which undertook the task of impregnating the proletarian masses with revolutionary doctrines \* It managed to get a footing among the proletariat and to give the workers' movement the orientation which rendered possible such organised manifestations as the Petersburg strike of 1896, and in consequence of which it did not confine itself to immediate practical demands, but from a purely social became a political movement.<sup>8</sup>

\*That a revolution in Russia could not be carried through by the workers alone is evident from the simple fact of their numerical weakness. In 1890 large-scale industry employed 720,000 men, in 1900 1,600,000, in 1913 2,500,000, the numbers rose in 1914 to about 3,000,000. Nevertheless, these figures prove that Russia was gradually being transformed from a purely agricultural into an industrial and agricultural state, and, moreover, that before the War this process of industrialisation was proceeding at a very rapid rate. Moreover, we must not forget that in Russia large-scale industry predominated. In 1913 38.9 per cent of all those employed in manufacture were in firms employing over 1,000 hands.<sup>9</sup>

## THE PROSPECTS OF REVOLUTION

The movement among the proletariat from which, together with the movements in favour of national liberation among the subject races, the revolutionaries recruited their battalions could never by itself have effected a revolution, if the struggle of the bourgeoisie for emancipation had not combined with it against the established Government. This struggle for emancipation weakened very considerably the power of the monarchy to take action at critical junctures. But even this movement among the middle class, in spite of its more or less potent psychological effects, could never have constituted by itself a decisive danger to the Government. Like the Socialist movement among the proletariat, which in its beginnings at least had been moulded by the intelligentsia, it could only become dangerous if at a crisis, when some danger threatened its country abroad, the Government proved too weak to handle the situation. Only under such conditions could the agrarian question become critical, and the self-confidence of the governing bureaucracy be widely shattered. The preservation of peace should therefore have been the most important concern of the Russian monarchy, since the war with Japan had already provoked a most serious internal crisis.

But to renounce external expansion was to run counter to the entire tradition of the Government. It had owed its power to conquest; it therefore deemed it impossible to dispense with further conquests. The impossibility of exploiting to its utmost capacity the territory already conquered, the purely external dominion over many regions of the empire—Poland was an obvious example—seemed only to impel the Government to further annexations. We may perhaps rightly see in this attitude a

phenomenon similar to the attitude of the peasantry, which as the result of its backward economic organisation was inspired and dominated by the conception that an increase in the amount of its land would deliver it from its distresses. And prestige was also a factor which played a considerable part. To compensate for the defects of the internal administration the educated classes had to be presented with successes abroad. There can be no doubt that already in the nineteenth century, but particularly since the accession of Nicholas II, the educated classes had been particularly responsive to projects of pan-Slavonic expansion. The educated class charged the Russian Government with being inimical even in foreign policy to the interests of Russia. Had not the experience of the Japanese War shown that the Russian people must be emancipated from its widespread ignorance and barbarism if it was to be fully capable of facing a foe armed with modern equipment? And during the World War also the chief complaint of the middle-class opposition against the Tsardom was that it had failed to make sufficient economic preparations for the war, to carry out the necessary organisation, or provide the necessary munitions.

It would, however, be a complete mistake to suppose that the position of the Russian monarchy during the final period of its existence became more insecure every year. No doubt various social groups were working against it, but we must not forget that of these the group which during the nineteenth century had been the most dangerous, or at least the most active, namely, the more or less revolutionary intelligentsia, lost in importance as the modern middle-class capitalist society became increasingly powerful in Russia. In the twentieth century complaints were heard more and more frequently from revolutionary circles that the attitude of belligerent opposition no longer determined the whole of life. The student seemed to abandon it

quickly enough as soon as he became a solicitor or doctor, or devoted his energies as an engineer to the development of industry. A new bourgeois class had begun to form which, in contrast to the bourgeoisie of old Russia—tradesmen, dealers and the like, the most conservative elements in the population and born foes of all social and political reforms—was western and therefore liberal in its sympathies. It would have been easy for the Government to satisfy this class. Indeed, to a large extent even the sham constitution from 1905 onwards satisfied it. But the bureaucracy was not sufficiently elastic. Far from displaying sympathy or understanding towards these circles, its attitude was one of estrangement and hostility. They therefore remained in opposition, even if their opposition was no longer radical and revolutionary. Nevertheless, this bourgeoisie which was not united with the masses could never have proved dangerous to the Government had the latter been able to maintain external order. This is shown by the events of 1905–6, the dress rehearsal for the Bolshevik triumph of 1917. Since, in spite of all the strikes and local insurrections, the Government succeeded in maintaining a firm hold over the military machine, in a short time nothing more was heard of the bourgeois struggle for emancipation, lately so radical in its demands. The bourgeoisie accepted the sham constitution which, moreover, was increasingly restricted by the Government's one-sided measures. That is to say, the bourgeois opposition was incapable by itself of overthrowing the established Government, or even imposing upon it a radically novel policy. It would constitute a danger to the Government only if it were assisted by a breakdown of the machine by which the Government maintained itself in authority. Then indeed the forces of social and political revolution, repressed by the might of a monarchy hallowed by tradition, could explode. Then

the sore constituted by the agrarian question broke and imperilled the entire social organism. Then the all-important question demanded its answer: who were to be the new ruling body which, after the fall of the monarchy and of the classes which traditionally shared the administration with the Tsar, would succeed to the government of the empire?

The bourgeois malcontents never doubted that they would constitute this governing class. Already in 1905, when the revolutionary disturbances and strikes were at their height, a cabinet containing Left Liberal elements had been on the verge of formation. But already in 1905-06 it had become apparent that the movement against the Government included three sharply-distinguished social groups. The bourgeoisie was only one of these, and could not permanently work in harness with its two temporary allies, the proletariat led by the Socialists, and the peasants hungry for land. At that early stage, however, it was impossible to recognise the true scope and character of the movement among the working class as the foundation of a state under the dictatorship of the proletariat, or to understand the full significance of the peasant movement, which at the time seemed purely anarchic.

#### STOLYPIN'S AGRARIAN REFORM AND THE POLITICAL CRISIS

The social danger of agrarian risings, 'an advance of the rabble' against the achievements of civilisation, was already plain enough in 1905-06. To be sure, the fact became soon lost to sight in view of the victorious self-assertion of the autocracy. Despite general strikes, street fighting and peasant revolts, it was only for a moment that agrarian anarchy and proletarian revolution had displayed their countenance. But the glimpse had sufficed to reveal to the Government the insecurity of its social foundations,

and to make it imperative to strengthen them. Stolypin, with Witte, Nicholas II's most important statesman, grasped the situation clearly. He recognised the decisive importance of the agrarian question. He was not satisfied with repressing the revolution relentlessly by exceptional measures and martial law, and throttling the political liberal opposition by restricting the liberties, already so scanty, granted under the sham constitution; he desired if possible to change the outlook of the Russian peasants.

He recognised that their passivity and their persistent dissatisfaction with the distribution of land were the results of the system of so-called village communism, of the village community. He therefore sought to destroy the village community, and secured the passing of a law which made it far easier for the peasants to leave it and build up a system of individual cultivation. Despite protests from those circles which regarded the village community as a sacrosanct institution because they saw in it the inheritance and expression of the distinctive Russian tradition or, like the Social Revolutionaries, a handle for the introduction of agrarian communism, the law was successfully applied in practice.\*

\*No fewer than 2,000,000 farms had transferred their holdings by 1917 into private properties, and some further 2,000,000 farms had definitely left the village community. And Stolypin's legislation encouraged the purchase of land by the peasants from the landowners; by 1913 no less than 7 per cent. of the land in the possession of the landlords in 1905 had passed by sale into the hands of the peasants. It had, however, also encouraged the growth of a proletariat recruited from the peasantry. No fewer than 1,200,000 farmers sold their farms between 1905 and 1915. As Jugov, from whose work 'Die Volkswirtschaft der Sowjetunion' (Dresden, 1929) the figures given above have been taken, points out, these landless peasants swelled the ranks of the urban proletariat or became farm labourers. The Russian *émigré* Iljin, an admirer of Stolypin's reform, gives as its result the following figures, taken from the last statistics. By 1916 no fewer than 6,174,300 farms, that is to say 47 per cent. of the total number, had left the village community. Within nine years 35 per cent. of the distributed land had passed out of the hands of the communities. In 1916, to quote Iljin's

The old village community was thus in process of rapid dissolution when the monarchy fell in 1917. The anti-Bolshevik *émigrés* are apt to draw from this fact the conclusion that within an appreciable time the revolutionary movement, in consequence of this dissolution and its results, the increased self-importance of the peasant and the growth of a strong feeling of property, would have lost its social foundation. As against this belief we must remember that the dissolution of the village community had left unchanged the entire social and political structure of the *ancien régime* which favoured revolution. For it signified no break with the cumbrous bureaucratic machine, which was incapable of coping with modern problems of economic and administrative organisation, as was proved during the World War, into which Russia plunged without adequate military and economic equipment. It did not therefore afford a permanent solution of the problems produced by the growth of modern industry. If during the years following 1905-06, a period of industrial prosperity, these receded visibly into the background, the first economic crisis would bring them to the fore in the most acute form. A sign of this was the increasing hostility of the workers to the patriarchal system of government, which operated in favour of the employer and showed itself radically helpless in face of such phenomena as strikes. This was shown, not only by that famous Sunday of blood in the January

statement, the peasant cultivator possessed 78 74 per cent. of the entire agricultural land as private property and the capitalist landowners the remaining 21 26 per cent. The land owned by public bodies (the crown, royal princes, monasteries, etc.) amounted to only 3 per cent. of the agricultural land in European Russia. Of the 155,000,000 *desyatinas* comprised by the small holdings, over 70,000,000 were the private property of the peasants. In 1861 the land distributed in small holdings had amounted to 119,000,000 *desyatinas*, in 1916, as we have just said, to some 155,000,000. When, however, Iljin designates this development of small holdings the capitalisation of agriculture, he neglects to take account of the increasing drift of the peasants into the urban proletariat.<sup>10</sup>



of 1905; it was further proved when, to the great profit of the radical propaganda, troops shot down the strikers in the Lena goldfields. Even the dissatisfaction with the existing Government felt by the middle class no doubt increased as industrialism developed. And what would have been the ultimate position of the peasants, stripped of their land by the growth of the large farmer and absorbed into the ranks of the proletariat? As is shown by the part they actually played in 1917-18, they would undoubtedly have given most valuable support to every revolutionary movement. And finally the formation of a self-conscious type of Great Russian peasant must have led ultimately to active currents of opposition in revolt against the traditional treatment of the peasant as a chattel of the administration. If the view of Stolypin's present admirers is correct, that the Russian peasant would gradually have been transformed into a kind of farmer, we must not forget that the farmer would not have fitted into the political and social system of the Russian Tsardom.

But it was neither the economic crisis nor the social development produced by the dissolution of the village communities which constituted a mortal danger to the Government. Already defeat in the war with Japan and the Government's consequent loss of prestige had stirred the liberal Socialist movements to striking activity. That war, indeed, had been comparatively insignificant, and had not shaken the entire life of Russia to its foundations. Nevertheless, it rendered a social crisis already in evidence sensible in its full acuteness. It was accompanied and followed by movements which for a time brought the administration almost to a complete standstill, led to anarchist revolutionary outbreaks, general strikes, mutiny in the Black Sea fleet—in particular on the battleship *Prince Potemkin*—and barricade-fighting in Moscow. The World War, as we should expect from its far greater scope,

produced far more powerful upheavals than the war with Japan. It led to the downfall of the monarchy, which in 1905-06 had still been able to maintain itself.

#### HISTORY AND ACTIVITIES OF THE OPPOSITION PARTIES

A summary of the most important events and movements which prepared the downfall of the monarchy will throw further light upon the social forces operative in the old Russia. The most important internal events during the second half of the nineteenth century were the emancipation of the serfs by Alexander II (1861) and the era of reforms which immediately followed; reforms intended to assimilate the administrative and judicial system of Russia to those of western Europe. But the reforms were left incomplete. They failed to satisfy the revolutionary intelligentsia or even to render it more moderate. On the contrary, it was during the reign of Alexander II that terrorism made its first appearance. But this terrorism had no connection with the masses, and therefore, in spite of the successful attempt upon the Tsar's life in 1881, it could not effect the overthrow of the Government. The sole result of Alexander's murder was to prevent the execution of a project to institute a sort of Russian parliament, so that the participation of society in the Government remained a project and nothing more.

The Government of Alexander III suppressed terrorism and reverted to a rigid absolutism. The revolutionary intelligentsia now found the chief theatre of its activities among the students at the universities. In 1883 former supporters of terrorism constituted abroad the first group of Marxists on a large scale, and thus gave the revolutionary propaganda what it had lacked hitherto, a fixed philosophic basis.

Simultaneously the process of industrialisation began

It was welcomed by the Marxists as the indispensable presupposition of the coming Socialist revolution, which must be the work of the proletariat. Russia therefore must first of all become ripe for revolution—an obvious renunciation of Utopian terrorism and agrarian Socialism, for the supporters of the latter had believed that the Russian peasant had a special aptitude for revolution owing to his organisation in the village community

✓ During the nineties this Marxist circle—of which the young Lenin was a member—began to establish contact with the proletariat. The intolerable conditions under which the workers lived led to strikes. This struggle for the betterment of their conditions provided a foundation for the Socialist propaganda. It was therefore exposed to the danger of becoming absorbed in a bread-and-butter struggle, in the endeavour to secure practical concrete advantages. Already in the nineties the youthful Lenin, a rigid Marxist, found himself obliged to combat alike the exploitation of Marxism as a weapon to create in Russia a capitalism of the western bourgeois type (Struve) and the so-called economism which would divest the Labour movement of its political character and restrict it to the struggle for higher wages, insurance against sickness, and the like. In 1897 the Marxist Social Democratic party was founded, distinguished from the heirs of the terrorists and agrarian Socialists of Alexander II's time, the Narodniki, who called themselves Social Revolutionaries, by its acceptance of the industrialisation of Russia and rejection of the romantic glorification of the village community<sup>11</sup> Besides these two revolutionary groups, bourgeois oppositions came into existence which demanded an up-to-date system of government for Russia, and found their principal support in the free professions, the manufacturers and the Zemstvos. Among the leaders of this bourgeois opposition for a time was Struve, who, in his

organ *Emancipation*, had broken with Socialism. From its ranks was formed, as soon as the legal organisation of parties became possible, the constitutional democrats known as the Cadets, led by Miliukov.

January 1905 brought the bloody Sunday, and with it the widespread disillusionment of the proletariat as to the patriarchal character of the Tsarist Government. The revolutionary movements, supported at first by the bourgeoisie, were successful in securing by the Tsar's October ukase the concession of a representative body—the Duma—and the fundamental rights distinctive of the modern bourgeois constitutional state, religious toleration secured against encroachments by the administration, freedom of the Press and public meeting. The social revolution went no further than sanguinary agrarian disturbances and local insurrections, of which the rising at Moscow in December was the most important. Even the Petersburg Workers' Council constituted by the Socialist representatives of the factory hands was unable to transform itself into a political organ.

When public order had been restored, the war with Japan brought to an end, and a large foreign loan secured in 1906, the liberties conceded by the ukase of October were restricted, and the Duma franchise in many respects altered by the Government. The Octobrists, who aimed at a compromise with the existing Government and were content to dispense with thorough-going political reforms, broke away from the Cadets. The period between 1906 and 1912 witnessed the dissolution of the village communities, economic advance, progressive industrialisation, and Stolypin's energetic anti-revolutionary, intensely Great Russian and nationalist internal policy. It is typical of the conditions under which the administration was carried on that, as a result of obscure police intrigues, this successful head of the ministry fell victim to the shots

of a bogus revolutionary in the service of the secret police.

During these years the revolutionary movement passed through a crisis which threatened its entire existence. Not only was the Socialist Marxian party, which already in 1903 had split into two sections, the Menshevik and the Bolshevik, crippled by internal dissensions. Lenin was obliged to combat attempts to legalise it; that is, to transform it from a revolutionary organisation into an organisation which, while accepting the established Government, would champion the interests of the workers. His struggle against economism was concluded by his struggle against liquidation. The Social Revolutionaries suffered from the lack of distinguished leaders. It is characteristic of the increasing uncertainty in their ranks that Savinkov, a leader of their terrorist groups, who had carried out successful assassinations, publicly raised the question of the justification of terrorism. Equally with the Socialists, they suffered from the presence in their body of Government spies. Atsev, Savinkov's comrade, proved an *agent provocateur*, as did Malinovsky, a member of the Bolshevik central committee and leader of the Socialist section in the Duma in 1912-13. Nevertheless, the difficulties involved in the rapid pace of industrialisation began to make themselves felt. The discontent of the workers drove them in the great industrial centres, particularly in Petersburg, into the Socialist ranks. When the War broke out in 1914 it interrupted an extensive strike. It was a glaring exposure of the utter inefficiency of the administration. The body of Russian manufacturers was obliged to take charge of the transport service and the supply of munitions. The conflict between the Duma and the bureaucracy was heightened, for the latter frequently seemed to adopt a sceptical attitude towards a war in which for the Russian manufacturers and middle class the national fortunes

were at stake. As in the period before 1905, opposition to the Government spread widely among the bourgeoisie, and the middle-class sections of the Duma, extending far to the Right, united to form a progressive *bloc* in perpetual conflict with the Government. The name of Rasputin may be regarded as a symbol of the prevailing abuses, and typical of the irresponsible autocracy. Failures of the transport service and the incapacity of the administration led to difficulties in the food supply. They coincided with conflicts between the Tsar, represented by weak ministers, and the Duma. It now became evident that the Tsar and his Government no longer controlled the military machine. The Petersburg garrison mutinied at the beginning of March, 1917, when employed in suppressing street riots due to the defective supply of food. It joined the rioters. The army was immobilised at the front, the generals declined to support the Tsar, and authority fell into the hands of the bourgeois circles represented by the opposition in the Duma. Thus came into existence the Provisional Government, in which the representatives of the Zemstvos (Lvov) and of Liberalism (Miliukov, Gutschkov) appeared at the beginning at least to be predominant.

## II

### THE BOLSHEVIKS SEIZE AND ESTABLISH POLITICAL AUTHORITY IN RUSSIA

#### THE WEAKNESS OF THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT

THE system represented by the Provisional Government, and inspired by the principles of the radical parliamentary democracy of western Europe could maintain itself in Russia only for a very brief interval. It failed to transform Russia into 'the freest democracy' in the world. The circle of politicians which succeeded to power on the fall of the old régime and Nicholas II's compulsory abdication, in spite of constant changes in the personnel of government, could only hold authority for a few months. In February it began to rule, in October (by the Gregorian computation of the West, the months were March and November) it had already been expelled from office, and, moreover, during the final months of its government had been devoid of any real authority and had become a Government only in name. A study of the causes which brought about this complete collapse of the democratic Provisional Government, in spite of the great popularity which its leader Kerensky undoubtedly enjoyed for a time, and in spite of the general rejoicings which acclaimed its formation, throws an instructive light on the immediate conditions which rendered possible the Bolshevik régime and explains why the political methods employed by the Bolsheviks were so successful.<sup>1</sup> The weakness of the Provisional Government consisted in the fact that it had only been made possible by the external collapse of the old

system. It arose as the joint result of the popular weariness with a war which had dragged out all too long and the indignation of the middle class at the incapacity of the Tsar and his administration to conduct the war and organise the internal front. The supporters of the new Government during its initial stage, the members of the opposition parties in the Duma, the so-called progressive *bloc*, had at first no perception of the fact that they and the masses of the people lived in different worlds. They considered a political revolution sufficient. Many among them (particularly Miliukov, the politician who during the War had become the mouthpiece of the Duma opposition), even thought that Nicholas's abdication need not involve the abolition of the monarchy. They believed that his brother, the Grand Duke Michael, might without any great difficulty become the first Tsar or Regent of a constitutional and parliamentary monarchy. This belief that the crash, once it had begun, could be quickly stopped at any given point is entirely typical of the attitude of the middle-class circles which at first acclaimed the new régime. A social revolution could, it was believed, be avoided. It was from this standpoint that they supported the continuation of the war. Had not Russia now become the true and hearty ally of the western Powers in their struggle for democracy, whereas the Tsar had warred only half-heartedly, always liable to yield to the temptation to conclude a separate peace with the Central Powers, whose sympathies lay with autocracy?

Even in circles which called themselves Socialist and regarded themselves as representing the masses of workers and peasants there was the same failure to perceive that the Revolution once begun could not be brought to a standstill. It is a mistake to suppose that the first workers' and soldiers' council or Soviet, which was formed in Petersburg by self-nominated and self-styled representatives of the factory-



hands and soldiers, differed in principle from the middle-class politicians of the Duma. No doubt there were sections in the Soviet that more or less toyed with pacifist terminology and social projects of a radical nature, but at bottom the council represented at the outset simply a group competing for authority with the bourgeois politicians, who sought a monopoly of power for themselves. It was dominated by Socialist politicians who claimed a share in the Government, and with that object appealed to the will of the man in the street. The majority of the Soviets which spread rapidly over Russia in imitation of the Petersburg Soviet were as anxious to continue the war as the members of the bourgeois opposition from whose ranks the Provisional Government had been formed, however they might be opposed to annexations, repudiate imperialistic aims, and emphasise the significance of the war as a struggle for new democratic methods of government. The Soviets confined their activities to obstructing the Provisional Government, claiming, as they did, direct legitimisation by the will of the revolutionary people, as the mouthpiece of the proletariat and soldiers, whereas the Provisional Government had been formed as a kind of committee of party leaders. It rested on no firm foundation. For it was set up provisionally to govern Russia only until the conclusion of the war made it possible to summon a national assembly elected by universal suffrage.

#### FAILURE TO UNDERSTAND THE MASSES

The Soviets, especially the all-Russian executive committee which represented them, entirely failed at first to perceive that their superiority to the Provisional Government was not due to their own strength, but to the fact that they seemed better able to meet the demand for a radical alteration of all social and political conditions.

The executive committee was content with reducing the Government to an even greater dependence upon itself. It is characteristic of this development that the statesman who enjoyed its confidences, Kerensky, early acquired a predominating influence and became soon after Minister for War and head of the Government. But of a distinctive independent policy of the Soviets there was no question. Even the executive committee was at bottom only a debating society, which did not dare to act, and for all its radical talk and resolutions lacked the courage to carry out decisive measures in the field of practical politics.

However successful the Soviets were in undermining from the outset the authority of the Provisional Government, the fundamental attitude of their first leaders was indistinguishable, despite party conflicts, from that of their bourgeois competitors in the struggle for power. The liberals of the first Provisional Government were afraid only of the social and pacifist Utopias of the Soviet Socialists. They wished to continue the war energetically, had no taste for a peace without annexations, did not contemplate renouncing the conquest of Constantinople, and by every means in their power supported discipline and protected private property, whereas the adherents of the Soviets were, in their professions at least, more radical and more democratic. But whatever the difference of political slogans, the supporters of the Provisional Government and of the Soviets were agreed in wishing to reconstruct the political system on western models. They quarrelled only as to the degree of this western adaptation; the outlook of some was more liberal and bourgeois, of others more socialist and democratic.<sup>2</sup>

But these distinctions in a common western orientation were insignificant in face of the mounting flood of social revolution released by the political change and threatening to become all engulfing. The downfall of the old political

order rendered the agrarian discontent an explosive force. This was clearly shown by the increasing number of expropriations of agricultural and forest land carried out by the peasants since the revolution. Only seventeen in March, they rose to 204 in April, 259 in May, 577 in June, and 1,122 in July. This hunger for land took shape as an elemental mass instinct, against which the most radical projects that did not effect an immediate distribution of land were impotent. The determination of the army to be demobilised and continue the war no longer was equally unmistakable. Moreover, it could appeal to the fall of the previous Government, which had carried on the war. When the Petersburg regiments which had refused obedience to the Tsar's Government were honoured with popular ovations, every soldier wished to remain at home to enjoy the honours of a revolutionary hero, at least in his garrison, but preferably in Petersburg, if, indeed, he did not prefer to take part in the land seizures in his native village. What could be done in face of this sheer anarchy?

Strict and permanent disciplinary measures were rendered impossible by the conflict between the Provisional Government and the Soviets, which were bidding for the support of the army. Since the new Government boasted of being a government of freedom, not compulsion, all the feats of oratory and disciplinary measures only availed to kindle a straw fire of speedily extinguished enthusiasm, as was shown by the failure in summer of the Kerensky offensive. When, moreover, we consider that the entire régime owed its origin to a breach of discipline, that socially and in its foreign policy it appeared a makeshift, that it possessed no firm foundation, we can readily understand why the rule of the Provisional Government led to a steady restriction of its basis and diminution of its actual influence. The middle classes turned away from it. They were suspicious of the Socialist Kerensky, wished to secure their property,

demanding a firm hand, and turned to men of action with nationalist sympathies.

It was the prevalence of such sentiments which encouraged the commander-in-chief, Kornilov, to undertake in August a military *coup d'état*, to attempt to restore order by his troops in a Petersburg foundering in anarchy. Kerensky, who at first had adopted an ambiguous position towards these plans to set up a dictatorship, but had decisively broken with them at an early stage, sought feverishly a new democratic commission to legitimate his authority. Even before the Kornilov *putsch* a national congress had been summoned in Moscow, and the party leaders now met as a kind of preparatory Parliament. Finally the elections for the constituent body awaited with such high hopes, the National Assembly, began. But it was too late. Discipline broke down universally. It was not only in the army that anarchy prevailed. Already Kornilov's attempt had clearly revealed its extent. For it failed, because in consequence of the internal disintegration the regiments under the command of this candidate for dictatorship mutinied.

The anarchy also brought industry to a standstill. The factories became debating societies. Many instructive passages in the reminiscences of the engineer Stankov show how frequently the employees took advantage of the revolution to avenge themselves on the managers and engineers. The engineers were bespattered with filth, pushed around in dirty wheelbarrows and beaten, and the workers spat in their faces. Attempts to restore discipline by democratic methods, by explanatory addresses to meetings of the hands, by promises and the like, failed. The transport, whose shortcomings had brought about the fall of the Tsar by their effect on the food-supply of Petersburg, threatened to break down completely. 'The railways will shortly go out of operation,' Lenin could declare in

September 1917. It is characteristic that during the entire period when the Provisional Government was in office the number of pogroms steadily increased. From twenty-one in March it rose to ninety-five in July and 389 (statistics incomplete) in September. The anti-Semitic Press enjoyed a very wide circulation, so that in October Bolshevik opponents of Lenin's policy of insurrection could urge against it the argument that there were no signs of a revolutionary upheaval among the masses as was proved by the circulation of the so-called 'black hundred' press (the reactionary and anti-Semitic organs).<sup>3</sup>

The vast masses throughout the Russian empire seemed in motion. Troops surged backwards and forwards without fixed aim or order, thus increasing still further the difficulties of transport; separatist national movements arose, particularly in the Ukraine; local Soviets refused obedience to the Government. In spite of an internal loan the national budget could only be balanced by inflation. Practically speaking the Government no longer possessed any means of compulsion. In the very heart of Petersburg private houses were seized by revolutionary groups. During the final stage of his government Kerensky no longer possessed a shred of authority, though by combining several offices—he was premier, minister for war and for a time commander-in-chief—he might present the outward appearance of a dictator. To what did his dictatorship of fine speeches and constant attempts to whip up enthusiasm amount, in face of the universal anarchy produced by the general war-weariness and the social disturbance released by the political revolution?

There would be no point in enumerating the different cabinets which succeeded each other at this period. Sometimes there were cabinets containing no Cadets, that is without the party of Left Liberals who had played so important a part in preparing the March revolution;

sometimes there were cabinets in which, although the various Socialist groups predominated, bourgeois politicians who were not Cadets participated. In all the Governments which followed each other and between them contained a host of ministers the dominant figure was Kerensky—a barrister whose intentions were undoubtedly excellent, but who was completely wanting in the determination required to govern a gigantic empire like Russia, especially at such a critical juncture. He was able to maintain himself in office because he occupied an ambiguous position between the Socialist and bourgeois political leaders, and a semblance of energy was mistaken for quality itself. He had come into power as possessing the confidence of the Soviets, and ended in a perpetual conflict with the opposition which threatened his authority from the Left and the Right alike.

The details of party tactics are of no importance, are of significance only as proving the incapacity of the classes which had been brought into power by the March revolution to maintain their authority. Their ideals were purely western, and they had no understanding of the real situation in Russia. This is shown clearly enough by their radical democratic programmes and projects, so ingeniously planned and so brilliant in appearance. The liberty they gave led only to anarchy and universal disintegration. Above all, they were blind to the necessity for swift action and an unambiguous policy in face of the such popular movements as the agrarian revolution and the demand for peace. Their policy on particular concrete points was inconsistent, and they were content with half-measures. They did not dare either to conclude peace or adopt any social measures of a radical kind. It is typical of their attitude that they postponed the agrarian reform until the meeting of the National Assembly, and the provisional prohibition of dealings in land designed to prevent the

seizure of the large estates was only decreed after long hesitation, too late; moreover, it was not made absolute.

The very title of this Government is characteristic. It was in truth a Provisional Government, but one that was not, as its supporters had expected, succeeded by a radical parliamentary democracy.

#### THE INTERVENTION OF LENIN

Within a few weeks of the fall of the monarchy the decisive peril which threatened the Provisional Government had manifested itself. In April Lenin, the leader of the Bolshevik party, returned to Russia from his exile in Switzerland. Until his arrival in Petersburg his party had, strictly speaking, hardly differed from the other radical but unpractical Socialist parties. This had been characteristically shown by the telegram of loyalty which one of its leaders, Kamenev, had thought it necessary to despatch immediately after the March revolution from his exile in Siberia to the constitutional Tsar Michael, who, however, never actually ascended the throne. Even Stalin, if we are to believe Trotsky's statement, was a loyal Socialist patriot during the first weeks of the new Government. In any case, like the other Bolsheviks in Russia, he offered no visibly effective opposition to the Provisional Government and the Soviet majority co-operating with it.

We possess a very striking account of the decisive importance presented by Lenin's return. It is the composition of Suchanov-Himmer, a Socialist publicist who oscillated between the Mensheviks and the Social Revolutionaries, and whom the Bolsheviks sentenced in March 1931 to ten years' imprisonment for counter-revolutionary propaganda. He depicts the arrival of Lenin's train at the station and how, there and then, at his reception on the platform, the breach opened between Lenin and Tscheidse, hitherto the

leader of the Soviets, a Menshevik who, for all his internationalism, favoured the continuance of the war. Tscheidse maintained that the primary task of revolutionary democracy was to defend itself against its opponents by maintaining a united front. Turning to the Soviet representatives, Lenin replied, 'I greet in you the victorious Russian revolution. I greet you as the van of the world army of revolution. A predatory imperialism was the origin of the bourgeois war throughout the whole of Europe. The hour is not distant when the peoples will turn their weapons against the capitalist exploiters. The Russian revolution has made a beginning and opened a new era. Long live the Socialist world revolution!' And as he was being driven on a lorry through the streets of Petersburg to the central office of the party, he stopped at every street corner to deliver an address in which he declared his opposition to the necessary transformation of the imperialist war into a bourgeois war. That night before the fellow members of his party he developed his entire political programme, to the extreme astonishment of Suchanov, who was among his auditors. For he maintained that a parliamentary republic, a bourgeois democracy, was unnecessary, and that authority must be seized and exercised by the Soviets of workers, soldiers and poor peasants.<sup>4</sup>

The seizure of power by the revolutionary proletariat, which, as the Bolshevik party had already pointed out in 1905, possessed its political organ in the Soviets,<sup>5</sup> was the simple programme which Lenin propounded—in short, a Socialist revolution. It came as a thunderclap even to his Bolshevik auditors, but he was not long in obtaining its acceptance by the party.

The use of a circumspect phraseology—by which, for example, the demand for the immediate election of a National Assembly was played off against the Provisional Government, out of regard for popular feeling, which



made it imprudent to urge the immediate conclusion of peace, as open to the charge of truckling to Germany—by no means meant that Lenin had surrendered his fundamental position. On the contrary, he was able to make it the fundamental position of the Bolshevik party. This was already plain at the first party meeting which he attended, even if his proposal that the Bolsheviks should entitle themselves officially the Communist party, to distinguish themselves from the Socialist patriots, was rejected. No doubt he found himself faced with a far from negligible opposition, which shrank in alarm from the practical execution in its entirety of the Socialist programme universally accepted in theory, which hesitated, which was as fond of discussions and artificially manufactured compromises as were the leaders of the other Socialist groups. But this opposition always yielded to Lenin's determination, in spite of the failure in July of his first direct attempt to seize power.<sup>6</sup> His following was considerably increased by the adhesion of a group of internationalist Socialist workers, bent upon bringing the war to an end and effecting a radical revolution. Of these Trotsky is the best known. And the group included such men as Uritsky, destined to play an important part at the beginning of the Bolshevik terror, and Joffe, the first Bolshevik ambassador in Berlin.<sup>7</sup> The entire opposition to the Provisional Government was united under the banner of Bolshevism; that is to say, all except those who looked for the strong man, the ruler who would re-establish order in Russia, bring the agrarian unrest to an end, and vanquish the anarchy prevalent in every department of public life. The revolting masses, deserters from the army, all who demanded immediate peace, found the solution in Bolshevism. To all who desired the continuance of the war Bolshevism was treason. An ingenious minister of justice in the Provisional Government, Pereversev, brought against the Bolshevik leaders charges

of collusion with the Germans, based on forged documents. Had not Lenin travelled to Russia through Germany in a sealed carriage in virtue of a special permit from the German general staff? Bolshevik leaders, Trotsky for example, were arrested for their share in the July revolt, which had attempted to turn the troops against the Provisional Government. The office where the chief Bolshevik organ *Pravda* was printed was gutted by young officers, and its publication forbidden as treasonable. But all the propaganda against Bolshevism and all the measures taken to suppress it proved fruitless. They could not remove its foundation, the entire collapse of order—for the Provisional Government was incapable even of understanding the feelings which the fall of the Tsar and the unexpected protraction of the war had aroused in the masses. Bolshevism, on the other hand, seemed to correspond with their sentiments. Was not a social revolution its avowed aim? To be sure, the Social Revolutionaries also possessed an agrarian policy of a radical character, and for that reason appeared to possess the support of the majority of the peasants. But only the Bolsheviks were in favour of carrying it out immediately by forcible methods. And they promised peace, attacking the imperialist war which had no meaning for the people.

They therefore soon found themselves at the head of the masses in revolt against the Government, and in particular of the soldiers. They constituted their active nucleus, and assumed the leadership. Not only were they successful in winning the workers, who expected an earthly paradise from the revolution, but they collected under their banner the mutinous sailors and soldiers, who resented the attempt of the Provisional Government, however feeble and embarrassed, to re-establish discipline at least partially. The decisive factor in the October revolution which brought them victory was the refusal of the Petersburg garrison to

obey the order of the Provisional Government to go to the front; instead it placed itself at the service of the Bolsheviks. The Bolsheviks were the keenest opponents of such counter-revolutionary attempts as the Kornilov *putsch*, so that the arming of the workers ordered as a defence against the general's threatened march on the capital played into their hands. It would be a complete mistake to attribute the victorious advance of Bolshevism which began to show itself even in the municipal elections to a general acceptance of their programme. They gained the support of the masses because they knew their own mind, made themselves intelligible, and propounded plausible solutions, which could be carried out immediately and answered to the needs of the moment. Besides the demand for peace their slogan, 'All power to the Soviets,' was typical. As the immediate organ of the working class the Soviets were opposed to the Provisional Government, whose authority rested on no legitimate basis and falsely claimed to represent the will of the people.<sup>8</sup>

#### THE BOLSHEVIK REVOLUTION

The Bolsheviks gradually succeeded in ousting the moderate Socialists from their supremacy in the Soviets. The latter, it is true, secured a majority on the first executive committee elected in May, but the control of the all-important local Soviets, especially in Petersburg and Moscow, slipped from their grasp. The Soviets under Bolshevik leadership, particularly the Petersburg Soviet, over which Trotsky presided, began to organise openly revolutionary groups prepared to seize power by force. It was Trotsky who authorised its members to refuse obedience to the Provisional Government.

Against the obvious growth of the revolutionary movement from the time of the Kornilov *putsch* the Provisional

Government was helpless. It had at its disposal no force on which it could rely. The higher command of those portions of the army which still supported the Government had no affection for it. It wanted an end of Kerensky's feeble pseudo-dictatorship, and believed that his overthrow by the Bolsheviks would pave the way for a return to a strong Government capable of asserting its authority. This belief was encouraged by the growth among the masses of a reactionary anti-Semitic movement. Thus the anarchy grew continually worse. It only needed a comparatively small organised group to overthrow Kerensky and his Government. The army fell increasingly to pieces, and the majority of the population adopted an entirely passive attitude, living only for the moment.

The authority of the Soviets was put forward as the basis which should legitimate the revolution and the formation of the first Bolshevik Government. That Government wished to appear as a Government of the peasants, workers and soldiers, and for that reason the *coup d'état* was planned to coincide with the meeting of the Second Russian Congress of Soviets. Troops already prepared by Trotsky's revolutionary war committee rose at a pre-arranged moment, and were joined, as had also been preconcerted, by Bolshevik sailors from Kronstadt. On November 7, 1917, the Winter Palace fell into the hands of the insurrectionists without any considerable fighting. The Provisional Government was abandoned by practically all its soldiers. This was convincingly proved when Kerensky, who had managed to make his escape, attempted to reconquer Petersburg. He was ignominiously deserted by Krasnov's Cossacks, whose monarchist commander had no great zeal for the cause of the democratic dictator. Petersburg gave the signal to the entire country. Everywhere the Soviets with their Bolshevik majorities occupied the public buildings and the central positions,

occasionally, as in Moscow, after street fighting. The victory of the Bolshevik insurrection must not be regarded as a mass movement. Its leaders were neither numerous nor endowed with any great military capacity. But they were the active element in the universal anarchy. Therefore they carried the day, while the mass both of the army and the people stood aside, determined at any rate not to fight for the Provisional Government.

The external seizure of authority by the Petersburg Soviet found expression in the constitution of the first Bolshevik Government. In the first Council of People's Commissars Lenin presided, Trotsky became Commissar for Foreign Affairs. Though by taking advantage of an unskilful attempt at obstruction made by the disunited Socialist parties the Government managed to secure a majority on the Congress of Soviets, it was still faced with difficulties of the most serious kind. These difficulties did not come from outside. They arose from the fact that during this first period of its existence the Bolshevik Government, like the Provisional Government it had replaced, was in danger from the prevalent anarchy, the universal upheaval of the foundations of political and social life. Its authority was at the outset purely nominal, for during the fight against the Provisional Government the Bolsheviks had proclaimed the complete autonomy of every local Soviet.

But the greatest dangers came from their own party. A section of the Bolsheviks, among them such leaders as Kamenev and Zinoviev, who possessed great influence in the councils of the party, had been opposed to the armed insurrection. When it proved successful, they shrank from the venture of a purely or almost purely Bolshevik Government. They were disposed to accept the demand of the Socialist party politicians and trade-union officials who desired a coalition composed of all the Socialist parties.

They did not wish to undertake immediately the execution of the Bolshevik programme in Russia, as Lenin intended. They regarded a purely Bolshevik Government as equivalent to a political terrorism which they rejected. They declared in favour of democracy.

Thanks, however, to Lenin's skilful manoeuvres, the question was decided in favour of a purely Bolshevik Government. He protracted the negotiations until the danger of a march on Petersburg by Kerensky and Krasnov had passed. He did not shrink from the most bitter denunciation of the sceptics corroded by doubts as to the victory of the Bolshevik revolution. Nor was the fundamental character of the Bolshevik Council of People's Commissars altered by the fact that shortly afterwards Lenin admitted the so-called Left Social Revolutionaries to a share in the Government. For the Left Social Revolutionaries had broken with the Right, the majority of the party, by supporting the immediate execution of the Social Revolutionary agrarian programme, which Lenin had adopted and immediately published as a Government decree. The coalition with this section was indispensable, if the Government were to appear as the ally of the vast masses of the peasantry. The Left Social Revolutionaries played no leading part in the Government, which they quitted after a few months during the disputes about the peace of Brest-Litovsk. In June they organised an armed revolt against the Bolsheviks in Moscow which was quickly suppressed. Their party then began to break up, and a large section went over to the Bolsheviks. It would be a mistake to exaggerate their importance; they were men of letters, intellectuals of radical views, completely incapable of coping with Lenin's skilful political strategy, devoid, moreover, of any clearly defined political principles.<sup>9</sup> The combination with the Left Social Revolutionaries cannot therefore be regarded as fulfilling the demand of

those Bolshevik leaders who strove for a Socialist coalition. Lenin was well aware that a ministry of that kind would not differ fundamentally from the ministries of the Provisional Government. His Government was intended to achieve quite definite political aims. The resolution—first made public in its entirety in 1931—which during this critical internal struggle Lenin brought forward in the Central Committee, contains utterances on the objects of the Government he led which are extraordinarily significant in their very brevity. The opposition is rebuked for its un-Marxian language as to the impossibility of a Socialist revolution in Russia, and is charged with attempting to sabotage the dictatorship of the proletariat and the poor peasants.

#### THE FUNDAMENTAL ATTITUDE OF THE BOLSHEVIKS

What kind of men were they whom the Bolshevik revolution brought into power in Russia? It is indispensable to understand their character if we are to understand their political methods, or indeed the aims of their policy. Otherwise it must remain unintelligible how they were able to maintain themselves in power, whereas their predecessors, the statesmen of the Provisional Government, had only remained for a brief moment at the helm of state. These statesmen had not proved able to repress anarchy; on the contrary, they had been obliged to tolerate it so long that a small well-organised group which based its propaganda on the anarchic instincts of the masses succeeded in winning over the armed forces of the Government, preparing revolt under its very nose and forming a Government themselves.

To understand the Bolshevik outlook, we must recall to mind the attitude of the intelligentsia as we have described it. The Bolshevik outlook is, in short, determined by the

adoption of a particular programme of political and social revolution as a religious creed. For Bolshevism, Marxism is not merely a sociological theory, a political method, but a revelation to be received with unquestioning faith, which admits of no doubts or radical criticism. This absolutism leads to the rejection of all moral obstacles that impede the execution of the party programme, the latter of course being the advent of the Bolsheviks to power. In consequence of their belief in the all-importance for humanity of the political and social life, everything is measured by its relation to that life. Traditional humanitarian considerations count for nothing. The end is all in all and justifies everything. It might be objected that this attitude was also dominant in the other radical Russian parties. In their case, however, it took possession only of the brain; it did not mould and transform the entire man.

In contradistinction to the Bolsheviks, the other revolutionary parties, even if they approved of individual acts of terrorism, which Lenin's party rejected as ineffective, remained to some extent in touch with the existing order. This had been proved by their attitude after the March revolution. They lived intellectually in the West, in whose soil they were rooted. This is the explanation of the fact that even such dignitaries of revolution as Kropotkin, the leader of the anarchists, and the first Russian exponent of Marxism, Plechanov, were in favour of continuing the war. For they believed in the alleged democratic aims of the Entente, and even when, like the Menshevik Martov, they were opposed in theory to the continuation of the war, they wanted a Russia either indistinguishable from the western states with their parliamentary and middle-class system of government, or at most distinguished by a few distinctive radical institutions. The Bolsheviks, on the other hand, rejected the existing order root and branch. At the same time they were in touch with the mentality



of the masses as were none of the other revolutionary parties. They refused to be satisfied with a change of political system; they demanded an immediate social revolution ruthlessly carried out.

They were, therefore, able to take advantage of the anarchy among the population while at the same time—since they possessed a perfectly definite programme embodying fundamental principles and intended for immediate application—they could exhibit sufficient energy and determination to maintain themselves in power. Their programme was no mere introduction into Russia of western democracy under some more or less imposing disguise. They could therefore make their own the watchword 'All power to the Soviets of Workers, Soldiers and Peasants'; that is, they could oppose the revolutionary expression of the people's will to its parliamentary and democratic expression to be determined by universal suffrage.<sup>10</sup>

#### THE ORGANISATION OF THE BOLSHEVIK PARTY

This radical programme, however, presupposing a destruction of existing institutions with which the masses were in entire sympathy, would not have been sufficient by itself to provide the basis of a permanent government. That basis they possessed in their party organisation, which was adapted not only to be a weapon for seizing power during a crisis, but to serve as the means by which it could be kept. We are not concerned here with the theory underlying the constitution of the party, but with its embodiment in practice. We shall not, therefore, undertake here a systematic analysis of the Bolshevik creed or of the conception of the party's nature and organisation which followed from it, but shall simply describe the distinctive character of the Bolshevik party as it developed historically.

To understand this development we must go back to the earlier history of the Russian revolutionary movement. About the middle of the nineteenth century, when terrorism was at its height, the prevalent type of revolutionary organisation was that of small groups without any connection with the masses, and with no intention (indeed without any possibility) of making contact with them. When this type had proved a failure, and Marxism, with its insistence upon the all-importance of the proletariat, had made its appearance in Russia, it was replaced by a type which sought to combine propaganda by the intellectuals with the organisation of the Labour movement into a proletarian party. By its side stood the heirs of the old terrorists who had cherished a belief in the special vocation of the Russian peasantry, the Social Revolutionary party, a group of intellectuals and men of letters without strict discipline who after the March revolution by their fluidity and above all by their theoretical agrarian programme, which met the wishes of the peasants, acquired a large but loose following. Among the Marxian Social Democrats, who, as we have already said, became an organised unit in 1897, dissensions soon arose on the question of party organisation. Very early it had been found necessary to ensure that Marxism should remain the inviolable foundation of the party, so that it could not degenerate into a species of trade-union movement, or organisation for securing higher wages. No sooner had this battle against so-called economism been won, than further conflicts broke out about the organisation of the party. These disputes, complicated by personal feuds, long-winded resolutions, polemics between the exiles, and constant changes of attitude by the leaders were concerned with the fundamental conception of the party. The Mensheviks worked for the triumph of a democratic party constitution on the model of the German Social Democratic party; anyone might join the party who was prepared to

subscribe to its programme. Lenin, on the other hand, and the majority who followed his lead, the Bolsheviks, desired a party of picked men, an *élite* that would receive no one into the party who was not prepared to promise obedience to its officials, that is to say, to take an active part in the revolutionary struggle which the party was waging.<sup>11</sup>

Lenin sought to strengthen the authority of the party leaders on the ground that in a party engaged in a revolutionary warfare, whose activities and existence must necessarily be illegal, formal democracy, the opening of its ranks to all comers, was necessarily impracticable. To attempt it would be to transform an army of belligerents into a debating society. Lenin's party may therefore be described as a body under strict discipline based on a rigid Marxian creed, and governed by a central committee of professional revolutionaries devoted to combating the Tsardom. No doubt in theory the governmental organs of the party were elective, but in practice a party vote was almost impossible in Russia. In a body of this kind the position of the professional revolutionaries, whose connection with the party was of long standing, and, above all, the position of Lenin himself was very strong. The rigid disciplinary methods, and Lenin's relentless struggle waged with iron determination to uphold the purity of Marxian doctrine with no concessions of any sort to modern political or philosophical movements, operated powerfully in the same direction.

The Bolshevik party was thus the party of discipline, though its membership declined as the result of internal dissensions during the years which followed the failure of the first attempt at revolution. In contrast to the other parties of interminable debate it was not crippled by indiscipline. Any member guilty of a breach of discipline was expelled from the ranks of the party, and thus by 1917 the type of man that is characteristic of Bolshevism at the

present day had already developed. The sole concern of such a man is to approve himself in the councils of his party; he is a man of iron discipline and obedience. The party as Lenin conceived it is a kind of military organisation engaged in unrelenting warfare and therefore without the leisure for public discussions and explanations, which cripple action; the object, once determined, must be achieved by any means available; every member of the party must understand this and bear it always in mind. This method has been described as the militarising of revolution. But we must not forget that historically the way had been prepared for the rigid military discipline of the Russian revolution, by the terrorist organisations, and indeed by the necessary conditions of an illegal existence.

Lenin applied this discipline to a party which deliberately turned to the masses and worked in co-operation with them. The Bolshevik party therefore as he conceived it may be regarded as a combination of the old Russian revolutionary movement, forced into discipline by the struggle in which it was engaged, with modern methods of mass propaganda. These methods, however, were not, as with the other Socialist parties, the subject of public debate, but were decided by small bodies. Public discussions and the formation of sections within the party were radically opposed to the character of the Bolshevik party as Lenin conceived it, and he held to his conception unswervingly. Before the war he vigorously combated all the attempts made by the followers of Bogdanov, Gorky, and Lunatcharsky to devise a new philosophical basis for Marxism. After the war he fought with equal determination the resolutions put forward by the group which supported Zinoviev and Kamenev and endangered the government of the party. He nearly always succeeded in winning to his views the officials of the party, and demanded from the other members obedience and discipline, even when it involved a

breach with accepted revolutionary ideas, brushing aside, for example, a repugnance to political terrorism, or to the exclusion of the Socialists. Here lay the secret of that superior strength possessed by the Bolshevik party which decided in its favour the struggle with the Provisional Government. It was a unit, centrally governed, whereas the Provisional Government, whose existence was constantly threatened by the rival Soviet organisations, was incapable of introducing discipline, and was supported by parties not only mutually opposed but internally disunited. Bolshevism therefore could steadily pursue definite aims, whereas its opponents, fettered by the compromises of party tactics and an apparent regard for the complications of the actual situation, became officers without troops or, like the Social Revolutionaries, in command of armies numerically enormous but impossible to handle.

The distinctive structure of Bolshevism proves so effective in Russia because it corresponds so perfectly with the Russian mentality. Just because its programme comprises political and social aims apparently quite Utopian and of the most radical kind it is able to make an appeal to the masses which no other political group can make. But it has also created the powerful organisations which enabled it to seize and hold power in the universal anarchy. It was this which distinguished the Bolsheviks from the Left Social Revolutionaries, who offered the masses an equally radical programme. The latter therefore remained individualists, radical agitators, men of letters and theorists, unable to form any comprehensive organisation because they possessed no discipline. The Bolsheviks on the other hand have been able to overcome the anarchy, maintain themselves against it and guide society to a predetermined goal because they represent a compact body of picked men strictly organised and under rigid discipline. It was therefore easy for them to give the appearance of representing

the will of the masses, for they were the sole organised force which existed in the ranks of the proletariat and which seemed completely to correspond with the instincts of the masses. All those who regarded the advent of the Bolsheviks to power as a passing episode and therefore greeted with ill-concealed delight the fall of the incompetent talker Kerensky failed to understand this. Bolshevism was for a long time regarded as but a transitional stage on the road to an authoritarian and nationalist Russian Government, until it was at last recognised that it did not simply represent the unfettered emancipation of mass instincts. For the Bolsheviks successfully introduced a cast-iron discipline to uphold their Government, imposed on the masses the most heavy sacrifices, and treated them with a relentless severity undreamt of by the Provisional Government. The entire history of Bolshevik rule is the most eloquent proof that it is possible in a time of political upheaval—a period when a strong traditional Government has been replaced by a weak one—for a small revolutionary group, if strictly organised, to seize power with the aid of skilfully directed denunciations of a situation out of harmony with the sentiments of the people and then to keep itself in power by employing methods which the Government they had opposed would never have dared to employ.

#### THE FIRST TASKS OF THE BOLSHEVIK GOVERNMENT

On its formation the Bolshevik Government found itself in a position of exceptional difficulty. On the one hand, it could not bring the rapidly extending political and social anarchy to too speedy an end—for it must appear as the organ of a truly revolutionary system. On the other hand, it must at the same time create such instruments of government as would enable it to determine positively the fate of the country. It could not be permanently satisfied with

expressing popular movements, called into existence more or less by temporary needs. It was faced by the well-nigh hopeless task of creating a new revolutionary Government, when it was by rejecting and overthrowing all the foundations on which government had hitherto rested that it had attained power.

Its immediate task during these first months of rule, when it had still to reckon with the universal anarchy, social and economic, was to transform itself from a nominal Government resting solely on force—whose authority, moreover, hardly extended in practice beyond Petersburg—into a real Government of the entire Russian empire. Lenin was never weary of repeating the maxim: 'All our public acts and utterances must appear to proceed from a firmly established Government.' The self-confidence expressed by the employment of such a method, which put forward the semblance of a secure authority that did not in reality exist, invested the Council of People's Commissars with prestige. The Government deliberately presented itself as a revolutionary Government which by careful planning and of set purpose had destroyed the old military and bureaucratic machine, or at least had so reorganised it that it is plainly something totally different, as it functions in the service of the new rulers. It is typical of this attitude that the ministers were entitled People's Commissars. In every detail the Government had to be a new system unlike the old.

Hence the strike in which the passive resistance of the bureaucracy took shape only assisted the Bolshevik rulers. It made it easier to demolish and break up the former machinery of government. Similarly the destruction of the old army assisted the preparations, pushed forward with the utmost vigour for peace negotiations. Individual regiments were allowed to conclude armistices with the enemy. When the commander-in-chief, Duchonin, de-

clined to open negotiations for an armistice he was dismissed by telephone. The Bolshevik commander-in-chief, Krylenko, appeared at headquarters with a guard of soldiers and marines on whose devotion he could rely, and the hatred of the privates for their officers found satisfaction in Duchonin's murder. The destruction of the old machinery of government assisted the anarchy. It seemed, therefore, as though the new authority—in spite of official pronouncements that the army must be kept together for the service of revolution—would be identified with anarchy. And the famous land decree published by the Bolshevik Government at the Congress of Soviets immediately after their accession to power pointed in the same direction. The decree abolished private property in land in Russia. But in reality the property of the peasants was left untouched. The confiscated estates of public bodies and landowners passed to the village committees and village Soviets. The land was given to its cultivators. The decree must be regarded as a particularly clever political move. To be sure, it was not in harmony with the Bolshevik programme for agriculture, which insisted on the necessity of communal cultivation on a large scale, but in the actual situation this adoption of the popular programme of the Social Revolutionaries was inevitable if the Bolsheviks were to maintain their authority. It sanctioned the social revolution, the forcible expropriation of the landowners by the peasants. The Social Revolutionaries had intended to carry this law through the national assembly. The Bolsheviks exploited their programme for their own ends, by putting the law demanded by the Social Revolutionaries into force immediately, not even waiting until the decision of the Council of People's Commissars had been ratified by the vote of the Congress of Soviets. Their action gave them a firm social foundation. It attached the peasants to the new Government, even though they had not given it



their direct assent; they had no interest in demanding a counter-revolution which would have restored the expropriated land to its former owners. Moreover, the decree operated at first against the interests of the wealthy peasants, reversed the process of dissolution which had already to a large extent befallen the village communities, and split up the land into small holdings.

In foreign policy the breach with the old system found expression not only in the renunciation of all annexations and of the Great Russian domination over other races, proclaimed by the first decree of the Soviet Congress, and by the openings of negotiations for an armistice and peace—but, moreover, in the cancellation of foreign debts and the publication of the secret treaties. As these decisive measures achieved their object, the Bolshevik rule appeared as a new system of Government, in accordance with the will of the masses.

Simultaneously preparations were made for setting up the new state institutions, and steps taken to develop a new constitution. The Government professed itself a Government of the workers. Every department of life, it declared, must be placed under the control of the proletariat. It could, therefore, sanction the anarchic conditions which obtained in the factories in order to destroy the control of the bourgeoisie over industry. The destruction of the bourgeois society was further assisted by the abolition of the former legal and judicial system, by making it impossible to apply old legislation of the Tsars or the Provisional Government as though unaffected by the revolution.<sup>12</sup> The recognition of labour as the foundation of the state and the basis of citizenship paved the way for the institution of a proletarian class dictatorship in which particular groups and classes hostile to the Bolsheviks were excluded from political power. The workers alone, it was declared, might decide the destinies of the new system of

government; they alone had the right to elect the sovereign Soviets.

#### THE LEGITIMATION OF THE BOLSHEVIK GOVERNMENT

By this apparent truckling to anarchy, which in reality served the purpose of demolishing the old political and bourgeois order, the Bolsheviks were enabled to legitimate their own rule. They thus achieved what the Provisional Government had never succeeded in achieving. Their legitimation was the appeal to the will of the workers, as the populace had expressed it by their revolt against established conditions, the agrarian rising, the demand for peace, the disintegration of the army, and the collapse of discipline in the factories, movements which the Bolsheviks confidently claimed as supporting their social programme in its denial of the existing order. This appeal was formulated in the slogan, 'All power to the representatives of the labouring masses, the Soviets,' which, under the leadership of the Bolsheviks, proceeded to overthrow the political and social system previously established.

Nevertheless, a great uncertainty overhung the first months of the Bolshevik system—the possibility that the National Assembly elected at the close of Kerensky's Government and during the early weeks of the Bolshevik rule might decide against the Bolshevik system. In spite of all manipulations of the voting the Assembly contained an admittedly anti-Bolshevik majority consisting of Social Revolutionaries. How would the Assembly deal with the Bolshevik decrees which had anticipated its decisions? Indeed, many of these decrees had been expressly designated as provisional measures, subject to its confirmation.

It cannot be maintained that the Bolsheviks had been from the outset avowedly opposed in principle to the National Assembly. On the contrary, under the Govern-

ment of Kerensky they had themselves demanded its immediate election. The more dangerous, therefore, was the threat to their power constituted by the majority of the *Utchredilka*—as the Assembly was commonly termed—which remained anti-Bolshevik, even after the exclusion of the counter-revolutionary Cadets. Now, however, Lenin made effective use of his watchword, 'All power to the workers and their representatives the Soviets' Even before the Assembly met, the Bolshevik central committee issued a proclamation which insisted that it must range itself with the working classes and their representative organs, the Soviets. The Government attempted to postpone its meeting. It was not to meet until at least four hundred members had gathered in Petersburg, a condition not easily fulfilled when transport difficulties were so enormous. At last, however, on January 18, the National Assembly could be opened.

The Bolsheviks were represented by 156 deputies out of a total of 601. Of seventy-nine electoral districts the results from the fifty-four most important, which comprised European Russia and Siberia, apart from the Caucasus, Turkestan and the Steppe regions, were known by the beginning of January. Some 36,000,000 had voted. The Social Revolutionaries had secured roughly 58 per cent. of the votes, the Bolsheviks 25 per cent. and the Cadets, who were reckoned as counter-revolutionaries, 5 per cent. The Bolsheviks insisted that the elections which had partly taken place before the November revolution did not represent the will of the people, because they were based on antiquated lists of candidates, which took no account of the split in the Social Revolutionary party. The National Assembly was therefore already discredited before it met. The Bolshevik leaders had procured from an executive committee of the Soviets a declaration of the fundamental rights of the working class, in which the most important

measures adopted by the Bolshevik Government hitherto were codified and at the same time formulated as propaganda; the cancellation of debts, the sanction of the agrarian revolution, the socialisation of the banks as the expression of the proletariat's control of society, and the like. At the opening of the National Assembly the Bolshevik president of the executive committee, Sverdlov, produced this declaration of fundamental rights as the norm by which the work of the Assembly must be governed.

The National Assembly possessed no power which it could have opposed to the Bolshevik Government. The majority had lost all prestige. Had not its leader, the Right Social Revolutionary Chernov, who had been elected president of the Assembly, proved himself utterly incapable as minister of agriculture in Kerensky's Government by his weakness and inability to act? The Bolsheviks were therefore able to dismiss contemptuously, after a single sitting spent in interminable talk, the Assembly which had been awaited with such high hopes as the opening of a new democratic era. The marines appointed to guard the Assembly said that they were tired, and closed the session on the spot. The danger that the Bolshevik Government might be displaced by a National Assembly chosen by universal suffrage was thus removed. Authority, no longer provisional, rested henceforward with the Soviets and the Bolshevik party, which determined their policy. Decisive action, prepared to stop at nothing, which seemed to correspond with the desires of the people, had firmly established a Government which appealed to the Soviets as the mouthpiece of the workers' wishes and championed particular propagandist ideals as expressing the people's mind.

## THE ESTABLISHMENT OF BOLSHEVIK RULE

When the Bolshevik Government had in some measure secured its existence, had destroyed the old administrative and military machinery, and had banished the danger from abroad by the peace of Brest-Litovsk, carried through by Lenin after hard struggles against a strong opposition within the party, the Council of People's Commissars turned its attention to establishing the foundations of its new power. In place of the old demobilised army it undertook the formation of a Red Army to replace the old Red Guards, who were fitted only for street fighting against troops already demoralised. This task was entrusted to Trotsky, who had left the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs when his formula, 'Neither war nor peace,' had failed and the German peace terms had been accepted.<sup>13</sup>

At the same time the activities of the Cheka became more visible than hitherto. This was a terrorist organ of the revolutionary Government which Lenin had set up on the basis of an appeal to Marx and after the example of the great French Revolution—the so-called extraordinary commission for the repression of speculation, counter-revolution and sabotage. The name 'Cheka' represented the initial letters of its name in Russian. Already in January the Third Soviet Congress had accepted the declaration of the workers' rights, out of which grew the first Constitution of the Bolshevik State, the Russian Socialist Federal Republic. The Constitution was ready by July. It strongly emphasised the class character of the state. Only the proletariat, the workers, could vote for the Soviets; that is to say, were full citizens. The state denominated itself a proletarian state, and in contrast to the old Russia, but in accordance with the principles proclaimed after the October revolution, extensive liberties were granted to the hitherto

subject races. These even extended to a theoretical right of secession. The so-called workers' control had already been decreed on November 16, 1917, as a means of destroying the bourgeois régime. The first article of the decree ran as follows: 'For the better regulation of industry in all industrial, commercial and agricultural enterprises, in transport, in the producers' co-operative societies and other undertakings which employ wage labour or give out home work, the workers shall control the methods of production, the purchase and sale of the products and raw materials, their storage, and the finances of the business.' This workers' control passed into the socialisation which was gradually carried out during the year 1918. The Economic Council thus constantly extended its jurisdiction. Freedom of opinion, moreover, was increasingly restricted; not only the economic life of the country, but its intellectual life also had to be controlled by the Bolshevik party. Within a few weeks of its accession to power the Cadets were proscribed as a counter-revolutionary party, enemies of the working class. The free organisation of parties was indeed for all practical purposes at an end, since after 1918 only those Socialist parties were tolerated which professed loyalty to the Soviet authority. The Press was muzzled by prosecutions before the revolutionary Press tribunal until, after July 1918—with the exception of a few insignificant organs which dragged out a shadowy existence—only Bolshevik papers could be published.

At the same time began in summer the first important period of systematic so-called Red Terror as a measure of reprisals in response to attempts on the life of Bolshevik leaders, amongst them Lenin himself. The death penalty had indeed been theoretically abolished after the October revolution, but it was inflicted, nevertheless, by the institutions set up to combat the counter-revolution, such as the Cheka, even when such sentences were not passed by the

public Bolshevik courts. But soon these courts also began to inflict the death penalty. In the summer of 1918 the Moscow revolutionary tribunal sentenced Admiral Tchaschni to death at the demand of Trotsky, who has thus played a decisive part in introducing terrorist methods against political opponents.

#### THE AUTHORITARIAN STATE

The Bolshevik state has been organised as a powerful state, moreover a state powerful, not only against bourgeois society but also in its relations with the proletariat. It recognises no individual rights that can in any way limit its authority. It admits only rights of the workers, which it claims to satisfy. The proletarian state cannot exist without discipline, and Lenin soon enforced the recognition of this fact against the Utopian projects and ideals of the commencement. It was not only in the Red Army that the utmost stress was laid on discipline and obedience—the election of generals and other officers which the Bolsheviks had decreed at the outset was soon forgotten in practice and set aside—but discipline was also enforced in the factories. Both Lenin and Trotsky declared that a Socialist industry is impossible without the application of the most modern methods of work—payment by output, the Taylor system. The cast-iron discipline that prevailed in the ranks of the ruling Bolshevik party must serve as a model for the entire country. Bolshevik rule must not be a continuation of Kerensky's contemptibly weak Government. On the contrary, the Bolshevik state must really determine the entire social organism, precisely because it regards itself as the mouthpiece of the proletariat whose brain is the Bolshevik party.<sup>14</sup>

To construct his powerful state Lenin employed two methods, unswerving ruthlessness and unceasing mass

propaganda. The ruthlessness would give proof of the energy, pride, confidence of victory, and consciousness of their mission which distinguished the proletariat and its leaders, the Bolshevik party. In contrast to the old Russian empire the new state must be an immediate expression of the people, however it might make its authority felt in every department of life with unrelenting and ruthless consistency. The denial of the liberty and rights of the individual, the suppression of public opinion, the annihilation, effected most brutally, of all groups which might have assisted a counter-revolutionary movement, the declaration of the class terror, which penalised the bourgeois innocent of any personal offence, simply as a member of his class, the complete disregard of humanity and tradition—all these measures were adopted, as official propaganda was never weary of insisting, solely in the interests of the working class. The old barbarous system of taking hostages was reintroduced, the wives and relatives of Tsarist officers who were serving in the Red Army were treated as hostages for the loyalty of their husbands and kinsmen, the courts ruthlessly administered a class justice, and the life of the middle class was made impossible, so that as a class it was wiped out, not only by the deprivation of political rights, but by direct spoliation: for example, by the confiscation of washing and clothes from mothers in child-bed, severe housing restrictions, and a discrimination against their children in the supply of food and in the schools, where a *numerus clausus* was introduced. This war of extermination against all classes which might be regarded as hostile, or might one day offer active opposition to the Government, would at the same time prove how securely it was established. The proletariat, on the other hand, would tolerate the sufferings of the present, the sacrifices imposed by the economic disorganisation, the scarcity of provisions, the iron discipline, and the horrors



of the civil war, because it was their own state which required them. It was they themselves who imposed these sacrifices on themselves—such was the conviction sedulously fostered by propaganda.

This development of the Bolshevik state into an absolute state in the strictest sense, a totalitarian state bringing the entire life of society under its sway,<sup>15</sup> was assisted by the period of civil war and blockade by the Entente Powers which had already begun in 1918. The war against the various White armies in Siberia and the Urals, in the Ukraine, in Esthonia, and in Northern Russia afforded excellent pretexts for converting Russia into a gigantic fortress from whose inmates every possible sacrifice might be required. Humanity and tradition had lost all their rights. For the existence or non-existence of the proletarian state was at stake, and the sufferings and terrors of Bolshevik rule could be explained after the model of the French Revolution as entirely due to the danger from outside. It was professedly only the threat of counter-revolution which made necessary the Terror, the relentless discipline, the total disregard for considerations of humanity. The Government could arouse the enthusiasm of its supporters by pointing to the self-interest which inspired its opponents, whose sole aim was to restore the old Russia with its enslaved masses and its landowners. Against such as these the Bolshevik Government might almost claim the halo of a national Government. Had it not shaken off the yoke of the western Powers by its cancellation of debts? Without the Bolshevik revolution proclaimed by the Bolshevik propaganda Russia would have become a colony of international finance. Already in 1920 Trotsky found himself obliged to combat tendencies to acclaim too ardently as a national war the war with Poland, which was allied with the White General Wrangel. The period of the civil war afforded a convenient pretext to build up the absolute

Bolshevik state, which, however, would have come into existence in any case, since it was in entire harmony with the views and structure of the Bolshevik party.

#### THE ORGANISATION OF THE BOLSHEVIK STATE

It would serve no purpose to describe in detail the constitution of the Bolshevik state and the development of its administrative machinery in a work whose object is to depict the political conditions of Russia today.<sup>16</sup> It is therefore unnecessary to give an account of the two Constitutions of 1918 and 1923. Their provisions as set down on paper have no importance; only the political and social forces which govern in practice matter.

In the first place we must emphasise the fact that the common belief that the place of Parliament has been taken by the Soviets is completely false. Nominally, no doubt, Russia is a Soviet republic. The supreme organ of government is the Executive Committee of the Congress of Soviets and its *praesidium*, whose present head is Kalinin. It is the duty of the *praesidium* to see that the Constitution is observed and the decrees of the Congress of Soviets carried out. Between the sessions of the Executive Committee the *praesidium* is the supreme legislative, executive, and administrative authority. It is elected by the Executive Committee, which in turn represents the Soviets. We might therefore be tempted to regard the Soviets as a kind of omnipotent Parliament ruling indirectly by delegated representatives and determining the entire policy of the Government. In reality the Soviets are very far from being institutions comparable with an omnipotent Parliament. No doubt the slogan, 'All power to the Soviets,' was the Bolsheviks' original platform in their struggle to overthrow the Provisional Government and undermine the authority of the National Assembly. It was the Soviets that legitimated

Bolshevik rule. But as that rule became firmly established the Soviets gradually lost their independence. From organs of a genuine proletarian state they sank to political instruments of a so-called dictatorship of the proletariat. The Second Congress of Soviets still served to give legal sanction to the rule of the Bolshevik Government, so that it could appear the mouthpiece of its will, but the Soviets have ever since been tools of the Bolshevik party. They are entirely dominated by the Communist sections and so-called non-party members whose existence is permitted by the Communists as a link with the masses. Parties other than the Bolshevik do not exist in the Soviets. Even the small and impotent opposition of the non-Bolshevik Socialist parties, which was tolerated at first, has now disappeared. This development has been determined by the suffrage by which the Soviets are elected.

The Bolshevik party draws up the lists of electors and candidates alike. The electors must accept by acclamation the lists presented to them. Unimportant candidates may no doubt be rejected by the electors. This assists the so-called actuation of the masses, but does not affect the general composition of the Soviets. Moreover, an obnoxious Soviet can be immediately dissolved on one pretext or another—for example, that the masses did not take sufficient part in its election, that the electoral lists had been inaccurately compiled. Further, the institution of the imperative—a mandate from the electors to carry out specific commissions—is used as an excuse to get rid of objectionable members. When Trotsky and his supporters had been excluded from the party for persistent opposition to the dominant section they were deposed from the Executive Committee of the Soviets. The election of the Soviets cannot, therefore, be compared with the election of parliamentary chambers. A free election would give an opportunity for agitation, even if only among the prole-

tariat against the Bolshevik party. That, of course, is not tolerated in the Bolshevik state. The sole purpose of the Soviet elections is to maintain contact with the masses. The elections are to actuate the masses, to interest them in the Government. They provide an opportunity to recruit new elements of the population for the direct service of the Bolshevik state. It is only for this reason that electoral campaigns are organised. They are intended to fulfil a double purpose—to educate the masses and to manifest their support of the existing system of government. They are political weapons in the war waged by the ruling class against the classes which formerly ruled. They have been utilised for the attack upon the Kulaks, the rich peasantry, to inform the urban proletariat of the political and economic progress achieved, and to impress upon their imagination the tasks to be accomplished.

The Soviets occupy, indeed, no independent position in relation to the Bolshevik party, but they can, nevertheless, be employed by the heads of the party as weapons against obnoxious sections or individuals. An election, for example, may be quashed because the local party organisation failed to secure sufficient popular activity during the campaign. And Soviets are dissolved because they contain objectionable elements. Thus the Soviet system is simply a link between the leaders of the Bolshevik party and the masses. To ascribe any independent significance to the Soviets today would only be to prove that the façade of the Bolshevik state had completely hidden its structure.\*

The famous principle of the unity of all powers in the Bolshevik state, claimed by the Bolsheviks as a sign of superiority to the clumsy machinery of the modern Euro-

\*It must also be borne in mind that the supreme Soviet organs—for example, the Congress of Soviets, the Executive Committee—are not chosen by the original electors, but indirectly by bodies below them. Consequently the higher their rank the greater the number and importance of the Communists, the representatives of the ruling party.

pean state, fulfils the same purpose as the Soviets. There is no separation between the executive, the legislature and the judiciary. It is, therefore, perfectly possible to alter sentences of the courts on political grounds, and for Lenin to blame a Bolshevik court for being too lenient towards persons dangerous to the Government. There is no possibility of invoking legal safeguards against political decisions. One sole interest determines everything—the maintenance of the proletarian state. All laws are therefore subject to the proviso that the supreme law is the safety of the existing order, of the proletarian state. Laws can be revoked or altered at will. Even the Constitution is always liable to be changed. The plea, of course, is that this renders the state secure and efficient; its true purpose is to maintain the unlimited power of the ruling party. No forms must hamper it in carrying out its will, its decisions must take effect immediately. No doubt, as in the case of an absolute monarchy, this theoretically unlimited power is actually limited by custom and by considerations of political opportunism. And in practice the omnipotence of the party state has led to the attempt of the individual representatives of the Government to escape responsibility, therefore to a monstrous development of a bureaucracy overwhelmed by a flood of administrative decrees and rules. But even this tendency is but a feeble counterweight to the omnipotence of the ruling political authority, which always reacts against these restrictions by such measures as the sudden creation of new bodies equipped with extraordinary powers of control, or the introduction of sweeping reforms.

The entire Bolshevik system of administration may be compared to a clumsy machine whose efficiency can be increased for a short time at least by a sudden and extraordinary application of steam, only to return immediately to its former inefficiency. A system of government

which in practice is absolute excludes the possibility of an organised and public political opposition. Opposition can manifest itself only by indirect means, by conflicts between different organs of government and by so-called 'bureaucratism' which carries out the orders of the central authority formally and in the letter without regard to their spirit, or leaves them unexecuted.

#### THE POSITION OF THE BOLSHEVIK PARTY IN THE STATE

The object of the entire structure of the state is to ensure the supremacy of the Bolshevik party—that is, to enable it to interfere in every department of social life. No rights are recognised that might limit this supremacy. The state, for example, utilises its power over the labour market to subject the whole of life to its political aims. There is but one publicity—the publicity of the Bolshevik party. And that publicity has but one object—to transmit to the country, to the people, the decisions of the party and its leaders who control the state, and to suggest to them that these decisions and orders are in the interest of the labouring masses. This dictatorship, theoretically unbounded, is well aware of its actual limits. It therefore addresses itself to the will of the people by publishing its decisions broadcast among the masses, thus seeming to seek their sanction, and seizes every opportunity to give the appearance of a popular Government, a Government which really represents the people and carries them along with it and does not, like the old Tsarist Government, rule them from above like an irrational herd.

This policy finds a typical expression in the Bolshevik policy towards the nationalities within the Soviet Union.<sup>17</sup> In the Bolshevik state all nationalities may develop freely. The old system of Great Russian supremacy, the so-called Great Russian Chauvinism, is a thing of the past. At first

the Bolshevik state was a federal republic. Today it consists of a Union of Soviet Republics constituted by a treaty between the seven united republics, Russia, the Ukraine, White Russia, Transcaucasia, Turkomanistan, the Usbek Republic, and Tajikstan. The constituent members of this Union enjoy a freedom in theory extraordinarily complete. The Constitution expressly guarantees the right of free secession. And in turn the individual republics recognise the autonomy of the nationalities within their territory. The Russian and Transcaucasian Republics are expressly entitled federal republics. Special provisions of the Constitution secure to the individual members of the Union the means of influencing the central organs. A special Council of Nationalities has been set up. Every nationality is permitted its distinctive intellectual life and culture, and the official language is everywhere the language in current use in that area. There is in theory no privileged language.

But this elaborate federal structure puts no restrictions upon the omnipotence of the party. It serves only to create organs which transmit the decisions of the central Government to the populations of the various nationalities and regions in a fashion comprehensible to them, and so mould the life of these populations that in the Bolshevik Government they see the power which educates and emancipates them and enables them to attain the self-consciousness of maturity. The common foundation of all political institutions, of all the federated republics, is the Bolshevik party, to whose interests all other interests are subordinate. Opposition to the party can be condemned equally well as an outbreak of Great Russian Chauvinism or as bourgeois nationalism. Only within this framework of Bolshevism do the nations possess the power of self-determination. The proletariat takes precedence over the nation, so that political measures inspired by class warfare may amount

to the direct repression of a particular nationality. This happened in the case of the Germans in the Volga district, who in consequence of their social position suffered particularly from the attack upon the wealthy peasants.

The cultural autonomy permitted to the various nationalities has done nothing to weaken the central Government. To prove this it is sufficient to enumerate the jurisdiction which the Constitution gives to the federal organs—foreign policy, loans, foreign commerce and the system of internal trade, the economic administration, transport, post office, telegraphs, and the federal budget, which receives the proceeds of the taxation imposed by the individual republics, the collection of taxes even in the individual republics of the Union, the monetary and credit system, agrarian policy, determination of the principles governing the regulation of labour, education and public health, and the decision of disputes between members of the federation. This enumeration—and it is not complete—proves that in Russia the authority of the central Government has not been weakened by the federal constitution. The federation and the respect for the rights of nationality do but serve as screens for an administration entirely determined by the Bolshevik party. That incidentally they are important as means of educating the masses, and as affording opportunities for the ambitions of particular sections of the population and their representatives, is beyond question.

#### THE OMNIPOTENT PARTY STATE

Behind all the façades which portray the identification of the Bolshevik state with the working masses hitherto enslaved by former Governments, behind the Soviets and the federal organisation, is hidden but one reality, which can be described in a sentence: the workers' state is the unlimited rule of the Bolshevik party. State and party so



far coincide that all the political institutions are but machinery of which the party makes use to direct society and determine its development. The Bolshevik state is therefore not a state which seeks the common good of all its citizens, but deliberately a party state, the tool of a party which by its means exercises its authority and effects changes in the interest of particular sections of the population which cannot benefit and are not intended to benefit all the citizens. Any development, therefore, which might weaken the efficiency of the machine which for the Bolsheviks constitutes the state, or restrict its operations, is made impossible from the outset. The rule of the Bolshevik party, and nothing else, is the *raison d'être* of the Bolshevik state. For that state, therefore, no humanitarian considerations, no traditions exist which in individual cases might restrain its employment of force, such as are sometimes to be found in absolutist states, no fundamental and universally valid rights of man which the state must observe and satisfy.

The state knows only one right, the right of the Bolshevik party, which controls its machinery to maintain its power. The maintenance of its power justifies its existence. Therefore this assertion of authority, the maintenance of the proletarian state, the support of the ruling party and the promotion of its aims is its fundamental principle in every department, which determines all its manifestations and activities.

Any limits actually observed in the application of force against non-Bolsheviks are a matter of pure expediency; and what expediency demands is decided by the Bolshevik party. Therefore the entire structure of the Bolshevik state excludes the division of powers characteristic of the modern constitutional state. This combination of powers is bound up with its absolutism. It is no sign of superiority, no sign that the Government is determined not to hamper

administration by an observance of empty forms, to be guided in all its activities by the immediate requirements of practical life and not to attempt pedantically to enforce inapplicable rights in face of a rapidly changing situation. On the contrary, the combination of all powers in the hands of the ruling party, the identification of legal right with the demands of its maintenance and policy, simply express the characteristic Bolshevik maxim: the might of the ruling party is unlimited, is under the Bolshevik system identical with right. The absence in the Bolshevik state of freedom of opinion and public meeting is no temporary restriction necessitated by a temporary crisis, and any toleration actually extended to non-Bolshevik opinions and groups—such societies for example as churches and sects—is merely a matter of political opportunism. This intolerance expresses the identification between the Bolshevik party and the state. Moreover, there can be no doubt that the Bolshevik party is above the state. The state, as a machine based on compulsion, exists only in the present order of society, whose transformation by every possible means is the aim of the party. Therefore the present political system, the state as at present constituted, involves the admission that that aim has not yet been achieved, that there are men hostile or indifferent to the party or ignorant of it, and corresponding concessions to that obstinate fact. But in principle there can be no rights against the party.

#### THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE AND TERRORISM

According to the Bolshevik conception the state is a weapon to be employed for the realisation of a programme which is to transform and determine the entire man. Therefore the supremacy of the Bolshevik party must be secured at all costs and by every possible means. The distinctive characteristic of the judicial system in the Soviet

Union is that it is avowedly regarded as a political instrument, a weapon in the hands of the proletarian dictatorship. A brief account of its general principles, in particular of the criminal law, will therefore throw further light on the peculiar nature of the state created by the Bolsheviks.

The Bolshevik state does not recognise the right of the individual to be judged in accordance with definite legal prescriptions and by a procedure which safeguards the accused by definite guarantees of a fair trial. The state has the right to employ a purely administrative procedure against individuals who endanger its existence or hamper the execution of its policy. The penal code itself is a political weapon. As the Soviet jurists are never weary of insisting, its sentences must never conflict with revolutionary sentiment. And in addition to the procedure laid down by the written code introduced in 1922 the Bolshevik state reserves the power to deal with any offence or class opponent directly, unhampered by a public trial. This claim of the Bolshevik state to assert its authority directly is founded on the recognition of terrorism as an administrative and political instrument.<sup>18</sup> Nor was this terrorism abandoned when the Bolsheviks had succeeded in firmly establishing their authority. The only result of their secure tenure of power was that the Cheka, the extraordinary commission for combating counter-revolution, changed its name to Ogpu—political administration. Attempts by the lawyers, in particular by the well-known public prosecutor Krylenko, to deprive the Cheka of judicial functions failed. The courts were only able to restrict its competence partially.<sup>19</sup> And in the end it triumphed over its legal adversaries; today the Ogpu enjoys plenary jurisdiction. It is competent to make arrests and impose the most severe penalties, including the death penalty. Its procedure recognises no guarantees in favour of the accused. It is not obliged to publish the charge or the result of its investi-

gations, or to specify the reasons of its verdict. Of a procedure regulated by definite rules, in which, for example, the accused is brought face to face with the witnesses, there is of course no question. The Ogpu is responsible for its decisions solely to the political authorities. Only the party has any actual control over it, or power to intervene. The Ogpu is thus a particularly clear expression of the Bolshevik conception of law. Law, in the words of the Bolshevik jurist, Stutchka, is 'simply that system or determination of social relations which represents the interest of the ruling class (the proletariat and its party), and which is supported by its organised forces, that is by the state.'<sup>20</sup> Consequently the Ogpu, in complete harmony with the Bolshevik conception of law, is guided in its action solely by political interests. During a financial crisis, for example when inflation is threatened, it will sentence hoarders of currency to death as a deterrent. It will then inform the public that by order of its governing committee some of the men under sentence have been actually shot. It gives out that it has discovered a counter-revolutionary plot among leading officials of a people's commissariat and that its leaders have already been executed. When news is received of an attempt on the life of a Bolshevik diplomatist it announces that to give proof of the invincible might of the proletarian state it has put to death certain individuals in its prisons suspect of counter-revolutionary activities. Its aim is not to promote impartial justice, but, as its entire character shows, to be an instrument for the discovery of plots, attempts at sabotage and the like. That is to say, it is a tool of political and social terrorism. The right to employ terrorism is a prerogative of the ruling class, for it serves to uphold its authority.\*

\*No reliable statistics are available of the executions ordered by the Cheka and Ogpu, for they are not obliged to publish their sentences. Moreover, during the early years of Bolshevik rule mass executions were carried out at the mere decree of the local branches, of which the

A few quotations will prove the organised character of the Red Terror. After the murder of Uritsky, the president of the Petrograd Cheka, the following appeared in the columns of the *Red Times* published in Petrograd: 'Let loose terror upon the living (bourgeois). . . Comrades, sailors, workers, soldiers! Destroy and wholly annihilate the remainder of the White Guards and bourgeoisie! Death to the bourgeoisie!—that must be our watchword. Death to the bourgeoisie!' In one night the Petrograd Cheka shot 512 hostages. On September 3 the People's Commissar of the Interior, Petrovsky, issued the following order. 'There must be no more slackness or sentimentality. The local Soviets must arrest immediately all known to belong to the Right Social Revolutionaries. Hostages in considerable numbers must be taken from bourgeois and military circles. The least attempt at resistance or the first sign of movement among the circle of the White Guards must be met by relentless mass executions.' Radek published an article in defence of the Red Terror in which he wrote: 'The Red Terror has been provoked by the White. A Red Terror, that is the application of similar measures,\* to compel the bourgeoisie to obey the proletariat, is a necessity of our internal and external situation. The destruction of individual members of the bourgeoisie, who have taken no direct part in the rising of the White Guards, is simply a deterrent measure at a moment of open war, our reply to assassins.†' It is only reasonable that for every Soviet official, every leader of the proletarian revolution, who

figures have yet to be obtained. The emigrants (according to Iljin, in his 'The World on the Brink of the Abyss') reckon the number of persons put to death at 1,860,000—among them 28 bishops, 1,200 priests, 6,000 teachers and professors, 8,300 doctors, 54,000 officers, 260,000 private soldiers, 105,000 police officers, 48,000 policemen, 12,800 civil servants, 355,000 other intellectuals, 192,000 workmen and 815,000 peasants. These figures probably include many victims of the civil war.

\*A circumlocution for the death penalty.

†An attempt to justify the practice of taking hostages.

perishes at the hands of counter-revolutionary agents, the counter-revolutionaries must pay with dozens of lives.' The very arguments which Radek employs against the shooting of hostages decreed by the Cheka are typical of the Bolshevik terrorism. Five public executions are, in his opinion, more efficacious than 'the shooting of five hundred persons at the orders of the Cheka without the participation of the workers.' His advice, however, was not followed. Mass executions in secret continued.<sup>21</sup>

The Cheka is subject to no People's Commissariat. The public prosecutor of the supreme court of the Soviet Union has the office of supervising its activities to secure their legality. But his jurisdiction is purely theoretical. The president of the Ogpu of the Union is a consultative member of the Council of People's Commissars. The Ogpu possesses its special army, distinct from the Red Army and independent of its general staff, and its separate prisons, under the exclusive control of its agents. It is thus a direct instrument of terrorism and compulsion in the hands of the party leaders. It is used to control and watch all branches of the administration. In particular it keeps watch on the actions of the Bolshevik diplomatic representatives. It appoints the secret agents who spy on the whole of public life. Nor should we think that its severity has relaxed during these last years, after it has developed a fixed organisation. In 1930, for example, forty-eight Soviet civil servants of middle-class origin were shot on a charge of sabotage, and their 'confessions' only published after their death. How secret the procedure of the Ogpu is may be sufficiently gauged from one instance. In 1931 a public trial of fourteen Menshevik leaders took place. During its course reference was frequently made to a Menshevik agent, Braunstein, who had been arrested by the Ogpu; but what the Ogpu had done with him never transpired. That he had been condemned was the only information

given; we are therefore ignorant whether he has been executed or is confined in an Ogpu prison.

#### THE SO-CALLED REGULAR COURTS

Besides the Ogpu—admittedly a political and terrorist tribunal—there also exists a so-called regular system of justice. But even these regular courts cannot be compared with the courts of the modern bourgeois constitutional state, where the accused enjoys legally guaranteed safeguards. They occupy, in fact, a unique position in the history of jurisprudence, for they have been deliberately constructed to carry out the fundamental principles of Bolshevik law; to promote particular political and social objects, not to administer an impartial justice. They are organs of the class war, and therefore political tools. Nor was the essentially political nature of Bolshevik justice altered by the introduction of a written code, which put an end to the conditions of the opening period, when the Bolshevik courts, in the exercise of their revolutionary class-consciousness, were creating revolutionary jurisprudence. The introduction of a written code has in no way put an end to the employment of the courts for political objects, which, as Krylenko, the public prosecutor, has observed, does but express the Bolshevik principle of the combination of powers. The penal code—and this is peculiarly significant—expressly emphasises that the judge's supreme rule must be to safeguard the existence of the proletarian state. Accordingly it is laid down in Article 9 that in an individual case the penalty may be determined by applying the fundamental principles of the penal code in accordance with the Socialist conception of justice. Every offence may therefore be invested with a political character, since the judge has not to consider the offence simply as it in itself, but in relation to the class to which

the accused belongs and its political significance. The slightest offence may be treated as a political offence for which death is the penalty. It is significant that the penal code prescribes the capital penalty for crimes against the state or the civil service, for military offences, derelictions of official duty, particularly grave economic crimes, or the destruction of goods, while on the other hand murder is not capitally punished. For the gravity of crime is measured by its danger to society, and a murder committed from some personal motive is, of course, not so dangerous as a political or economic offence calculated to encourage the bourgeoisie or relax discipline in the factories. The political character of Bolshevik law is also expressed in Article 28, which provides, as we might expect, that the court is not obliged to inflict the minimum penalty prescribed. For this enables it to take into account the proletarian origin of the accused, his services to the revolution, and similar considerations. Equally characteristic is Article 25, which prescribes as the rule to be followed in determining the penalty the consideration whether or no the offence was committed with a counter-revolutionary motive. And the political offence of counter-revolutionary activity is defined with an extreme amplitude; Article 57 defines as counter-revolutionary every action which involves a deliberate attack upon the fundamental political and social achievements of the proletarian revolution.

The penal code is therefore extraordinarily severe. Generally speaking, it equips the courts with the amplest powers to punish political and social opponents of the established Government with the utmost rigour. The formal declaration, couched in the most emphatic terms, that for Soviet jurisprudence there are no penalties for particular offences and crimes, but simply measures of social defence, is a pure fiction. For in practice it makes no



difference whatsoever whether the death penalty is entitled a measure of supreme social defence or not. The theory of social defence has led only to the result that so-called criminal offences, so long as they do not, like the organisation of a troop of bandits, threaten the entire social order, are punished far more mildly than so-called political offences. To the former is applied the doctrine that punishment should be a measure of social protection and educative to the offender, whereas the political offence committed by a class enemy is punished with the utmost severity. In the latter case 'the protection of society' demands the physical annihilation of one who by reason of his class is unamenable to education.

But the guarantees for a political administration of justice set up by the code do not satisfy the Bolsheviks. The political authority, the Executive Committee of the Soviets, is entitled to participate in the verdicts. This means in practice, since the Executive Committee is dependent upon the Bolshevik party leaders, that these leaders are omnipotent even in the regular administration of justice. The Executive Committee may, for example, decide that it is not desirable in a particular instance to apply an amnesty which it has itself decreed, and that the death sentence must therefore be carried out. 'The Executive Committee pardons and condemns entirely at its own good pleasure without any limitation upon its prerogative.' This dictum of Krylenko's in 1922 is still applicable today to the Soviet administration of justice, even after the introduction of a written code. The principle of a political justice is also manifest in the functions assigned to the public prosecutor. It is continually emphasised that he must regard himself as an agent of the Government's policy. He is severely reprimanded if he conducts his case in accordance with formal principles of law—that is, if he simply applies the letter of the code,

without taking the political and social situation into account. The operation of the formula of Bolshevik jurisprudence, 'No formalist law,' expresses the same belief as its fellow, 'No more crime, but condemnation in accordance with the harmfulness of the deed to society'—the belief that the administration of justice and the courts of law should be simply a weapon wielded by the proletarian dictatorship; that is, by the Bolshevik party.

Like the Soviets, the courts also serve as a link between the party leaders and their Government and the masses. One effect of the political character imparted to Bolshevik law is to transform the courts into platforms where propaganda is carried on on behalf of the ruling party, where its aims and views are advertised and justified. This is the *raison d'être* of those sham trials in which a fictitious tribunal composed of members of the party, workers and the like, passes sentence for educational purposes upon social evils, on the dangerous character of religion and the non-proletarian classes, on bureaucracy, insufficient performance of the party's orders, drunkenness or superstition. But it is also true of genuine trials which, unlike the sham trials, are not simply public meetings masquerading as courts of law. The Bolshevik tribunal must not be satisfied with rectifying a particular injury to society; it must endeavour to expose the general cause underlying that injury, and thus at the same time justify the policy of the ruling party and impart to the masses new determination in carrying it out and a stimulus to accomplish the task.

This has been the constant practice of the Bolshevik courts—from the trial of the Right Social Revolutionaries in 1922 to the important trial of the expert Ramsin and his fellows in 1930. In the latter middle-class savants and engineers were charged with sabotage. They were accused

of organising a species of plot by the foundation of an industrial party supported by emigrants, which by combating the Bolshevik economic policy would pave the way for a foreign invasion. Nevertheless, a progressive 'improvement' can be observed in the utilisation of the court of law as a platform for political and social propaganda. At the trial of the Right Social Revolutionaries only a handful of the accused—and they, moreover, of minor rank—pleaded guilty. It was very different with the trial of the experts. Then the accused seemed to amalgamate with the accusers. The public prosecutor needed their confessions as subject-matter for social and political propaganda, for a justification of the Bolshevik policy, its aims and methods.

This development has resulted from the entire nature of the Bolshevik judicial system. No one need be brought to public trial whose appearance before the public would be in any way embarrassing to the Government. The OGPU exists to deal with such political opponents. Hence those accused who are to be publicly tried are carefully sifted out. For example, not all those charged with participation in the industrial party plot were tried in the public courts. Meck and Paltchinsky, who were mentioned during the trial of the experts as leaders of the industrial party, were imprisoned and executed by the OGPU. For the entire order of the trial, the determination of the sentence by the consideration of social injury, requires before anything else in political trials the confession of the accused. These penitent confessions are of political value to the Bolsheviks as, for example, in the case of Ramsin or of the fourteen Menshevik leaders whose confessions were utilised as evidence of the political collapse of the opposition and the victorious might of the Bolshevik state. By his confession the accused supports in his fashion the Bolshevik policy, and at the same time enables the Government to pardon

him and prove the superiority of the proletarian dictatorship by a mild penalty.

Naturally these penitent confessions do not always produce the desired result. It may be expedient to execute even a penitent offender, as in the case of the former Bolshevik deputy, Malinovsky, who at the same time was in the service of the Tsar's Government as a spy. The execution can be easily explained by casting doubt on the genuineness of the repentance. Nevertheless, penitence is a much more hopeful attitude for the accused to adopt than denial of the charge, however weak the evidence against him. The state is always in the right as against the accused, and we might almost say that it is in itself a counter-revolutionary act to cast doubt upon the verdicts of the Bolshevik courts by contesting the charge. This is certainly true of the great political trials arranged for purposes of propaganda. In these cases the only sensible course for the accused is to do what is expected of him by providing the Bolsheviks with material for the furtherance of their policy. But it is also true even in trials of minor importance. The best defence is to ascribe the offence to particular political and social circumstances; not to deny that it was committed.

#### THE LAW OF MARRIAGE

Our account of the principles and procedure of the Bolshevik criminal law has shown the determination of the Bolshevik state to regard all social phenomena from the standpoint of its own existence. The state does not exist to administer justice, but conversely, the administration of justice is simply a weapon in the hands of the governing party to maintain and secure its authority. And particular provinces of human life, which the constitutional bourgeois state, respecting as it does the fundamental laws

and rights of humanity, at least takes under its protection, are left by the Bolshevik state to the free disposition of the individual.

We are referring to the Bolshevik legislation on marriage, whose individualistic character appears to contradict the principle of state absolutism that distinguishes the Bolshevik state.<sup>22</sup> In this solitary instance a state which otherwise recognises no individual rights, or at least determines them at its arbitrary choice, leaves the individual unlimited freedom. It concerns itself with the relations between man and woman—indeed with sexual relations of any description—only so far as their results affect population and health, or might lead to the oppression of the individual, particularly of the woman. Sexual relations which our law punishes as unnatural—incest, for example—however much they may be discouraged, are not punishable in the Bolshevik state, as not being harmful to society. They become criminal only if they can be proved to injure society. The legislation about abortion is decided by considerations of hygiene. It is only permitted in the state hospitals. In theory its permission is intended to help the poorer members of society, though in practice it has been found that a far smaller percentage of these poor people have availed themselves of the permission than had been expected. If the state does not encourage abortion, it is because it believes that as Socialism advances conditions will steadily improve, and, above all, on medical grounds, because abortion has been proved injurious to health. Today therefore the conditions under which it is permitted are stricter than they were. Moreover, one of the principal reasons for which abortion was made legal, in addition to the famine produced by the civil war, was the desire to replace quacks by skilled doctors.<sup>23</sup>

The Bolshevik state regards the entire sexual life, to use its own terminology, as a private matter. Its legislation

does not aim at upholding lifelong monogamy, but simply at preventing marriage from being made an instrument of social wrong—as, for example, when advantage is taken of ignorant women. It compels fathers to provide for their children and for the mother, and the woman has a legal claim to be supported in accordance with the man's means. It does not attempt to maintain marriage by making divorce difficult or favouring legitimate children. Before the promulgation of the final civil code in 1927, there were Bolshevik theorists who urged that the state registration of marriage should be abolished, thus carrying to its logical conclusion the assimilation expressly laid down in this code between actual marriage, i.e. every more or less permanent cohabitation of man and woman, and marriage registered by the state. For Bolshevik law, marriage is a private contract without any permanently binding character, which is registered by a Government official. The cancellation of this entry—that is, the dissolution of the marriage—is as easy as the original registration. A polygamous union, it is true, cannot be registered; the former marriage must be dissolved before a second can be concluded. But the registered marriage enjoys no legal privilege; the family is simply the natural kinship of blood, and the law does not distinguish between legitimate and illegitimate children.

Such a marriage code seems to represent rather a thorough-going individualism than a state absolutism which claims to control and determine man's entire social life. When, however, the motives for which it was introduced are examined more closely, a deliberate political aim is revealed in this sphere also.

The Bolshevik law of marriage is based on the endeavour to destroy a venerable pillar of bourgeois society, its state and its economic system. The family, based on a monogamous and lifelong marriage, must be removed from its

central position in the social fabric by depriving it of state protection. Its place as the basic unit of society is to be taken by the community of workers in the same business undertaking. By this means the Bolshevik state hopes to promote a social development favourable to the supremacy of its ideas. The emancipation of the woman from the family, which the new legislation is designed to assist, will produce economic changes, present a handle for state interference, and, above all, destroy the foundation of the old order. The old state was obliged to respect the institution of marriage, traditionally sacred. The Bolshevik state is under no such obligation. Already in 1918 it made haste to substitute civil for religious marriage.\*

Since marriage is made a mere form of sexual relations, a purely private affair, no intermediary is left between the individual and the state. Thus the traditional institution of the family is legally abolished, an institution which might otherwise have presented an obstacle to the omnipotence of the Bolshevik state. The state has cut itself completely adrift from the old order of society. By its matrimonial code it acts as a solvent force in a social sphere hitherto, at least juridically, stable and sacrosanct. Since this

\*If the code of 1927, as contrasted with the legislation of 1918, no longer makes civil marriage obligatory, it is only because the Bolshevik legislators believe that the religious and ecclesiastical marriage which they sought to destroy in 1918 is no longer dangerous. The primary object of the new legislation is to protect the so-called actual—that is, unregistered—matrimonial (more correctly, sexual) union. The legislator's intention in this is not to favour sexual anarchy, but to transform marriage into a purely natural union without any sacred character attached to it. The old possessive marriage must be replaced by the working partnership of man and woman, which no longer claims, like the old family, a privileged place in the social structure. The Bolshevik legislators claim that by this change they have got rid of the hypocrisy of the bourgeois marriage, which is no longer in harmony with the changed conditions of social and economic life, withdraws the woman from an active part in the work of society, and over-values sexual love. By its legislation the Bolshevik state seeks to assist a development which for the old family substitutes the industrial unit and the corresponding forms of social life.

sphere, as organised up to the present, might offer resistance to the supremacy of the Bolshevik order, it is reduced to a private status—deprived, that is, of all power of legal enforcement.

The Bolshevik state machine has thus secured a legal basis from which to counter any attempts to utilise the family as a starting point for opposition to its omnipotence and work of social transformation. When the cohabitation of man and woman has been made a purely private affair, and the principle of granting special state protection to lifelong monogamy has been abandoned, it becomes possible to strengthen Bolshevik authority, not only by emancipating the woman, as in the case of backward nationalities or peasants, but by playing off children against their parents.

That the Bolshevik registered marriage can establish no juridical community with its distinctive rights and authority is self-evident. Parents therefore possess no special legal authority over their children. It is only because of the practical impossibility of removing them from their parents' charge that they are still brought up in the family <sup>24</sup> The law recognises no parental rights taking precedence over those of the state, which can therefore determine the child's education. Children can attack their parents when it suits the interest of the Bolsheviks. The latter have no legal right to keep their children away from Bolshevik teaching and organisations. Indeed, the children may even be employed as active agents to win over their parents to Bolshevism. It is here that the fundamental principle of the Bolshevik matrimonial code is revealed most clearly. Its abolition of all the privileges and special protection formerly enjoyed by the monogamous marriage assures the Bolshevik party a strong influence over society. The seemingly individualistic matrimonial law of Bolshevism is thus in reality an instrument to extend and strengthen the absolute authority of



the state and its power to influence decisively the social life of Russia.

#### THE LEGISLATION DEALING WITH RELIGION

Like the matrimonial law, the Bolshevik legislation on the subject of religion and the churches furthers its aim of destroying all institutions which might oppose the absolutist claim of the state and of the party in control of the state. Like the traditional family founded on the indissolubility of marriage, all forms of religion are regarded by the Bolsheviks as component parts of the pre-revolutionary power. But whereas the direct organs of that power, the civil service, the judiciary, the army, and the Press, can easily be given a new orientation, be Bolshevised, this is not possible in the case of institutions so deeply rooted in society, in its customs and traditions, as the family and religious bodies. They essentially contradict the claims of the Bolshevik Government to determine and guide the entire social fabric. Therefore they must be abolished. But that abolition is not immediately practicable. It will be a slow work which can only be achieved by gradually thrusting the doomed institutions from public life.

Hence the Bolshevik Government appears, in its religious as in its social legislation, to adopt an attitude of extreme individualism. Like marriage, or, to use the Bolshevik phraseology, all forms of sexual cohabitation, religion is completely severed from the state. This separation, the Bolsheviks believe, will overthrow its entire foundations. For they regard the power hitherto exercised by religion as resting primarily on its support by the state. Therefore they lost no time after the October revolution in decreeing the complete separation of Church and State, a measure which in its main lines still determines the policy adopted towards the churches in every part

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of the Soviet Union. A consequence of this separation is freedom of conscience and worship, by which the Bolsheviks primarily hoped to injure the Orthodox Church, which they particularly detested as the ally of the old political régime. Attacks upon the new Government by any church or other religious society were, of course, made illegal. The penal code explicitly forbids the exploitation of the 'religious prejudices' of the masses—the very language is significant—in an attempt to overthrow the workers' and peasants' Government or to incite to resistance of its laws and decrees. In 1929 restrictions were placed upon propaganda on behalf of a religious creed. Originally Article 4 of the federal Constitution was worded as follows: 'To ensure genuine freedom of conscience to the workers the Church is separated from the State and the school from the Church. Freedom of religious and anti-religious propaganda is guaranteed to all citizens.' At the request of the Congress of Soviets the final sentence has been recast. It now openly states what is the actual position: 'Freedom of religious profession and anti-religious propaganda is guaranteed to all citizens.' The freedom of the churches is thus very strictly limited. They are not allowed to carry on propaganda.

Ever since the advent of the Bolsheviks to power, all who depend for their livelihood on the conduct of religious worship, the clergy of all denominations, have been treated as citizens without political rights. Like the members of the classes formerly dominant, the bourgeoisie, tradesmen and the like, they have no vote for the Soviets. Priests are forbidden to give public religious instruction. Nor may regular religious instruction be given in private to pupils who have not reached the age of eighteen. The priest may not take any part whatsoever in education; he may not occupy any position under public authority, or be an officer of any association. The law does not recognise

religious communities possessed of juridical rights, but merely groups of believers who constitute private associations without any right to hold property. These private associations are permitted to use the churches.

The entire code dealing with religion enables the state to take severe measures against the churches. For the least opposition to its decrees or to the views put forward by the Government their clergy are liable to be charged with counter-revolutionary activities; while at the same time the state can conciliate the 'prejudices' of the people by strongly emphasising the freedom of conscience which it proclaims, and which does not admit official repression of religious belief, but is content to wait until it perishes from the spread of enlightenment. This 'toleration,' however, does not preclude the most severe external oppression of the churches. The People's Commissar of Justice issues detailed instructions for the campaign against religious prejudices; for example, how to combat the belief in the alleged incorruptibility of the saints' bodies. The following quotations from a circular issued by the Commissariat of Police on August 25, 1920, are typical of the spirit in which this legislation is carried out; in semblance it maintains freedom of conscience, but in reality is employed to promote atheism: 'On the representation and urgent request (!) of the workers in the departments of . . . the coffins of fifty-eight corpses alleged to be incorrupt were opened. These openings took place in the presence of the workers and clergy, of skilled doctors and representatives of the Soviet Government. A number of cunning contrivances were exposed with which the clergy deceived the working class.' It was expressly pointed out that this examination of incorrupt bodies must be carried out only on the initiative of the workers of the district and by permission of the local executive committee or congress of Soviets. Thus the appearance was given that these anti-religious

measures were adopted in the interest and at the desire of the people. Equally typical of the anti-religious policy of the Soviet Government and the political fictions with which it is supported is the confiscation of the Church treasures during the famine in the Volga district in 1921. This general confiscation was of course decreed only for political and social reasons; the confiscated property was to be used to relieve the sufferers from the famine. The Government was therefore able to employ the most severe measures of repression, even execution, against clergy who opposed the confiscation, for they not only were guilty of counter-revolutionary activities, but demonstrated the anti-social character of religion in the eyes of the people.

#### THE ANTI-RELIGIOUS FRONT

The apparently complete freedom left to religion by the absolute separation of Church and State is thus in reality only a method by which the atheist state carries on its campaign against religion. Toleration is simply a temporary episode, to continue only until atheism has penetrated the masses. The liberty accorded by law to religious bodies, churches or sects is severely restricted—they are regarded as permanent enemies of the Revolution. Their entire existence is in reality only tolerated so long as the development of society has not yet reached the point at which the Bolsheviks aim and at which on Marxian principles it must infallibly arrive. The actual toleration of religion is simply a concession to a condition of society in which there are still masses of the population who, in consequence of their religious 'prejudices,' would revolt against the Government if the churches were immediately closed. Whenever in its opinion society is ripe for it, the Bolshevik party can destroy the churches entirely. The administrative pressure against the clergy, who as such belong to the class of suspects,

opponents of the established order, can be exercised with the utmost rigour whenever it is thought politically expedient, as easily as a milder administration and interpretation of the law can be adopted when retreat appears the more prudent policy. There is nothing to prevent the closing of the churches when the opportune moment arrives. This fact is not altered by the issue of decrees against administrative repression or outrage to the religious sentiments of the people. The associations of believers who are allowed the use of the churches are subjected to the necessary pressure, or the representatives of the proletariat have only to decide to close them or turn them into workmen's clubs. If those who adopt such procedure continue to speak of avoiding compulsion, or of freedom of conscience, it is simply the language of political opportunism. At present the population has not reached this point, but the Government, that is the party which controls the state is doing everything in its power to 'educate' it.

To deprive religion and its representatives of all public rights is one of these methods of government propaganda intended to pave the way for the abolition of the toleration still accorded for political and social reasons. The chief strength of religion hitherto, so the Bolsheviks believe, has lain in the support of the ruling classes; if the ruling classes become hostile to religion, religion must finally perish. It is illegal to display religious emblems in any Government institution. Religion must not even appear to enjoy the least favour from the state. And it is significant that the display of religious emblems in private shops open to the general public is also prohibited. Moreover, any village Soviets who in more or less disguised forms support the building of a church or organise collections for church purposes are acting in diametrical opposition to the wishes of the central Government and the party officials.

The sole notice which the state takes of the churches and

their clergy is to deprive them by every possible means of their rights. The tribunals regard them simply as members of an anti-proletarian class. A discrimination is exercised against their children, unless they have broken with their parents, as against the children of the bourgeoisie, in such matters as entrance into secondary schools or other institutions for higher education, or finding employment. From time to time it is reported in the Communist Press that elements hostile to the proletariat in the shape of priests' sons and daughters have made their way into the party ranks, the organisation of young Communists, where their mischievous activities have given clear proof of their origin. The pretext that the Church's worship and preaching must be purely religious can be used to justify the most severe measures against religion. Indeed, the entire Bolshevik legislation is characterised by its extraordinary elasticity and lack of precision.

Whatever is calculated to spread disunion in the ranks of believers is fostered by the Government. To weaken the Orthodox Church it showed favour at first to the sects, though when the latter proved too successful in winning adherents they in turn were persecuted as counter-revolutionary. It supports all internal divisions within the Orthodox Church, all attempts to combine Christianity with Communism, such as the so-called Living Church, a movement that opposes the Church of the Patriarch Tikhon (which is denounced as reactionary and is supported by the higher clergy) and claims to represent the interests of the lower clergy. This policy, however, is not inspired by any genuine sympathy with these attempts to found churches favourable to the Soviets, but solely by the desire to weaken religion and by these dissensions among its adherents to render it ridiculous and contemptible.<sup>25</sup>

The entire system of public education which plays such an important part in Soviet Russia, since it is also used to

educate the illiterate and backward adult population, is definitely anti-religious. This is the meaning of the separation between the Church and the school. Today the school, since the religious neutrality hitherto professed has not fulfilled the expectations of the Bolsheviks, must be avowedly atheistic. All social movements of an anti-religious kind are supported by the Government and the party, even if the State is not officially identified with their organisers. For they are supported as a means of securing the state of opinion at which the Government aims, and serve as a barometer to register the feeling of the masses. The Pioneers, the children's organisation controlled by the Bolshevik party, are as atheistic as the Komsomol, the Communist Association of Youth. All Communist campaigns, elections to the Soviets, recruiting for the party, include propaganda for the League of the Godless, which, like the Associations of Youth, is not officially a party organisation, but is actually conducted by leading members of the party and enjoys the whole-hearted support of the party state. Freedom of association does not exist in Russia, and all associations which are permitted to indulge in any public activities serve as links between the party and the people. They therefore belong to the state and the party machine, even if nominally they possess no official character.

To sum up, this combination of the professed atheism of the ruling party and a toleration granted for reasons of expediency makes it possible to wage war upon religion by the most various methods. A brutal atheistic propaganda goes hand and hand with protests against the alleged violation of children's minds by reactionary parents. The absolute power wielded by the state admits the employment of every weapon, from the execution of priests as agents of the counter-revolution to decrees enjoining toleration, which on purely political grounds condemn the

brutal violation of conscience—for example, by the forcible closing of churches—and assure the means of subsistence to the clergy. The principal methods employed to combat religion may now be briefly described.

There are, first, methods of violence, charges brought against influential priests, demands for declarations of loyalty couched in terms impossible to accept, their rejection being made an excuse to persecute the churches for counter-revolutionary activities. Administrative pressure may also be applied—the necessary paper, for example, being refused for ecclesiastical publications, on the plea that the public opinion of the workers demands it. Frequently, however, a campaign of propaganda designed to educate the masses takes the place of violence. The public dissection of the saints' bodies alleged to be incorruptible, of which we have already spoken, was a method particularly favoured during the early years of Bolshevik rule. The clergy were ordered to hold public debates with Bolshevik representatives. The nature of these discussions may be gauged from the question propounded by the leader of the anti-religious campaign, Jaroslavsky: 'How is it that holy water can breed vermin as well as ordinary water?'<sup>26</sup> Other favourite methods are propaganda among children, the organisation of secularist festivals, anti-religious drama and films, and the five-day week\* to prevent Sunday worship. The anti-religious propaganda follows two main lines. It must expose the superstitions and irrational nature of religious faith. But it must at the same time expose the 'social roots,' the class character of religion. Religion must be represented as merely the ally of the bourgeoisie, an instrument for oppressing the people, an obstacle to social, technical and economic progress. Every possible argument must be employed to prove that it is not only superfluous, but

\*Now a six-day week.



directly injurious to the labouring masses. That in spite of theoretical prohibitions this anti-religious mass propaganda does not spare the religious sensibilities of believers is obvious. It employs every weapon from irony to direct mockery or 'scientific' arguments of the most banal description. Particular stress is laid on these scientific arguments against religion; for instance, explanations of natural phenomena alleged to render belief in God superfluous—though it is always insisted that these must not be the sole form of anti-religious propaganda. The scientific enlightenment of the masses must go hand in hand with their social actuation, their education in the interests of the Soviet Government, so that they approve its principles and co-operate with its projects. Thus the propaganda against religion forms an organic part of the Bolshevik political system. It cannot be regarded as the private enterprise of particular groups and organisations.

We must also bear in mind that any public defensive propaganda by the churches is restricted to the utmost degree possible. Officially all religious propaganda is now illegal, and the prohibition may be given an extremely wide interpretation. Literary apologetics on any considerable scale are made impossible by the state control of publishing and printing. The entire atmosphere of public life is, so far as the Government can influence it, saturated with hostility to religion, from the education of children to the enlightenment of adults, from the daily Press to the revolutionary festivals. The atheism of the ruling party makes it impossible in practice for active believers to hold important social or political positions. The Government thus hopes so to restrict the foundation of the religion still tolerated that it will finally disappear altogether, just as the traditional monogamous marriage with its special consecration and the family founded upon it will, it is hoped, be destroyed by the new legislation. The

final remaining barriers to the social omnipotence of the Bolshevik party and its creed will then have fallen.

#### GENERAL CHARACTER OF THE BOLSHEVIK STATE

As its history and distinctive character prove, the Bolshevik state is an absolutist state guided solely by considerations of political expediency, and the determination to maintain its authority. At the same time it entitles itself a proletarian state and appeals to the will of the people, to whom it seeks to impart a particular orientation, the outlook which conforms with the wishes and ideas of the ruling Bolshevik party, whose power the masses are to support. The absolute power of the state is not regarded as an end in itself. The authority of the party which uses the state machine to achieve its ends is a means for setting up a particular social order which will justify and legitimate its forcible government. Hence our description of the political methods employed by the Bolsheviks to maintain their government must be completed by an account of the social aims pursued by an absolutism which seeks to destroy all obstacles, political or institutional, counter-revolutionary movements of every description, church, and family, and, if this cannot be effected immediately, to undermine them gradually by withdrawing state assistance and supporting all hostile movements. What is the nature of the Socialism to which the Bolshevik party appeals as the justification and goal of its government? Only in the light of the economic and social policy of Bolshevism can we understand the working of the Bolshevik political system, of the absolute Bolshevik state.

### III

## THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL POLICY OF BOLSHEVISM

### THE GOAL

'To realise Socialism, that is, to construct a society without classes and without private trade in which production is systematically regulated by society in accordance with the needs of the community as a whole and every individual in particular (Engels), the most modern technical methods are employed, and the means of production publicly owned—such is the avowed goal for whose attainment the Bolshevik party seized the government of Russia in November 1917.' This concise definition, given by Friedrich Pollock in his work *'Die planwirtschaftlichen Versuche in der Sowjetunion, 1917-1927'* (Frankfurt, 1929), clearly summarises the aims of the Bolshevik social and economic policy. The machinery of compulsion operated by a state under the control of the proletarian party serves only to promote the attainment of this end. It is undeniable that hitherto the Bolsheviks have pursued their goal with a ruthless consistency. In spite of all mistakes and the tactical compromises which they necessitated, pauses to take breath—retreats, as Lenin called them—they have held firmly to their aims. Hitherto every assertion that the Bolshevik party has clung to its programme simply as a means of practical propaganda has proved sooner or later to be erroneous. Maurice Dobb is right when, in his book *'Russian Economic Development since the Revolution'* (London, 1928), he insists that it is a

complete mistake to lose sight of the fact that such concessions as the so-called new economic policy are but tactical manœuvres towards the attainment of the Communist goal. And Michael Farbmann is therefore completely mistaken when, in his study of the 'Piatiletka' (Berlin, 1931), he informs his readers that Lenin intended the new economic policy to be permanent. Methods have changed, but not the goal. Hopes of its speedy attainment have been surrendered, but the political, social, and economic measures adopted by the Bolsheviks are still determined by the ideal of the Socialist society.

This, of course, is not to deny that the actual results of Bolshevik rule in Russia will, when viewed in the light of history, appear very different from the expectations and intentions of their authors. There is every justification for inquiring whether Ustrialov, for example, is right when he contends that the principal effect of the Bolshevik Government of Russia has been to free it from the influence of western capitalism, and to create a new national and Asiatic Russian empire, Lenin and Stalin being thus the heirs of Peter the Great. For the mere fact that it was formulated too hastily, and therefore exaggerated the significance of particular changes of method adopted by the Bolsheviks, is not enough to refute his contention. And, on the other hand, Von Eckardt's thesis is also worthy of examination—that the result of her Bolshevik Government has been to make Russia, by her adoption of the methods of modern capitalist industry, an economic province of western Europe. In Von Eckardt's view the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics is far closer akin to Europe and America than to the Holy Russia of the past 'Because Russia conceives her mission to consist in combating the capitalist imperialism of the great world Powers, she is obliged to assimilate herself to her opponents, to compete with them and adopt their outlook.'<sup>1</sup>

But to approach the study of the historical development of the Bolshevik economic and social policy from such standpoints as these is quite unjustifiable. It can only lead to a false perspective. The development is too hastily set in a false context and its interpretation is therefore liable to be proved false by the future. For example the significance of opportunist retreats is over-estimated, and the general direction of Bolshevik policy lost sight of. In the description which we shall attempt of the main lines of Bolshevik economic and social policy we shall therefore always keep in view their relation to its constructive socialist aims. The future historian of the Russian Revolution, who will enjoy an access to the inner history of the Bolshevik party which we can never possess, will find it a tempting task to investigate the development that gradually led Lenin to abandon his first great error of political strategy—without which, however, he might well have lacked the courage to carry through the Revolution. That error was a miscalculation of tempo, a false estimate of the time required to create a Socialist society and the possibilities of achieving it. It may indeed be untrue that he 'ever believed that Socialism could be immediately established without the previous conversion of the masses' Trotsky, however, is certainly correct when in his sketch of Lenin he states that the Bolshevik leader believed that a Socialist society could be realised in the near future. Lenin believed in the advent of a world revolution, the transformation of the war between the nations into a class war, from which the proletariat would emerge victorious. Had these expectations been fulfilled, the peculiar problems of Russia would have become of secondary importance. Russia would have become an agricultural province, a store-chamber of the Socialist world-state created by the international revolution. But Lenin also believed in the possibility of establishing Socialism at least in its main

lines in Russia before the world revolution. That is proved by the celebrated draft of a resolution drawn up against the hesitations of Zinoviev and Kamenev, which upholds this faith against 'cowards and traitors.'<sup>2</sup>

No doubt many obstacles stood in the way of setting up a Socialist society in Russia, but Lenin believed that they could be overcome comparatively quickly—almost at a single bound. These obstacles were the backward economic development of Russia, the existence of a peasantry for which Socialism offered no attraction and which saw in the Revolution only an opportunity for land-grabbing, the comparative weakness of the industrial proletariat which, according to the Marxians, was the organ of the Socialist revolution, and the inexperience of the men suddenly placed in authority. The delay in the arrival of the Socialist society is explained by the Bolsheviks as the combined result of these Russian difficulties and the failure of the world revolution to mature. The entire economic and social policy of Bolshevism is a struggle to cope with these obstacles and surmount them; a persistent endeavour to triumph over them with the help of the party's political authority.

These efforts are determined, as we should expect, by the relation between the task of constructing a Socialist society in Russia and the world revolution, and by the necessity of creating the conditions which alone can make the new economic order possible. Even to begin the task of its construction pre-supposes a belief by no means to be taken for granted in a Bolshevik, that the undertaking is rational and practicable even without a world revolution—that is to say, in a world still ruled beyond the pale of Bolshevik authority by capitalist and bourgeois governments—and that it is not therefore indissolubly bound up with the outbreak of world revolution. This granted, the attempt must be made to effect in Russia the primary presupposition

of Socialism, the transformation of a state still semi-feudal into an industrial state, to accelerate a social and economic development artificially by employing the compulsory powers wielded by the proletarian Government. In other words, the construction of a Socialist system in Russia must take the place of the 'bourgeois epoch' which Russia has never known. It is difficulties of this kind which have determined the various changes of method in the execution of the Bolshevik economic policy. They are far from signifying a departure from the goal which the Bolsheviks have set before themselves as the justification of their forcible seizure of authority.

#### THE MEASURES AT FIRST ADOPTED

On the morrow of its advent to power the Bolshevik Government found itself faced with the task of grappling with the economic anarchy and establishing contact with the industrial situation. This was the period when Lenin believed that a control of industry by the workers would be an important step on the road to Socialism. He believed that if the banks were nationalised and the entire system of finance and credit taken over by the state he would so to speak have his hand upon the rudder of industry. At the same time the power of the old bourgeois society, of the employer and the technical experts in his service would be destroyed by placing the factories under the control of the workers. The experts, still indispensable, would then be brought into the service of the state and the Socialist society it was seeking to establish.

The political aims which dictated these measures were indeed to a very great extent realised, and the foundation of the bourgeois society shattered, but only at the cost of sheer anarchy. The socialisation of the factories, begun from below by the workers' taking control, and only legally

sanctioned after the event (though sooner than had been thought possible), did not mean that the new owners learned how to organise, manage and direct the factories taken over. Lenin's belief that these functions could be easily learned, and that they need not be divided into special departments, and could therefore be interchanged at will—the cook, as the saying goes, being capable of doing the statesman's work—soon proved false and impracticable, completely fantastic and Utopian.<sup>3</sup> Already during the period of the workers' control, before the legal socialisation of factories, when it was still thought possible to combine the former conditions of ownership with that control, the technical knowledge of bourgeois managers and experts and their methods of work were found indispensable.

That is to say, the position was the same in industry as in the Red Army. There the former officers had to be won over and their services utilised, Bolshevik control being confined to a political supervision to ensure that they took or plotted no action hostile to the Bolshevik authority. In the factories discipline proved equally indispensable.<sup>4</sup> Lenin insisted that the immediate industrial and social tasks could not be performed without the aid of experts receiving higher pay. This was, he admitted, a departure from the principles adopted by the Paris Commune, which during the first period has been taken by the Bolsheviks as their model for the seizure and organisation of their authority. He demanded the strict keeping and control of accounts, without which any industrial undertaking is doomed. The proletarian state was therefore not slow to make it known that the workmen's behaviour must in future be very different from what it had been in the epoch of capitalism and the private employer. Trotsky attacked unconscientious and lazy workmen and demanded that they should be brought to trial. Lenin combated the



democratic system of meetings, which undermined the discipline of daily work, and insisted upon obedience to the orders of foreman and manager. The state began to declare in favour of payment by the piece and to forbid strikes, as henceforth anti-proletarian. The trade unions were treated as organs representative of the workers' interests, with no right to an independent policy hostile to the Bolshevik party.<sup>5</sup>

This first period of Bolshevik rule may be regarded as the period of tentative economic experiment. The prime necessity was for the Government to secure its authority, and many demands of a purely propagandist nature were therefore still published in decrees and laws. The Bolshevik leaders still lacked practical experience. As Pollock correctly points out, they adhered closely to the example of the Paris Commune and the model of the Communist manifesto. Like Marx and Engels, Lenin hoped to subject trade to the control of the victorious proletariat by centralising credit in the hands of the state. As Pollock clearly puts it, 'Lenin had pictured the destiny of trade in the social revolution as similar to that of the state itself. Both must first be seized and all the leading positions occupied by the proletariat. In the course of time new forms of organisation would develop.'

This belief indeed is still the Bolshevik faith, but it was united at this period with an under-estimate of the rate at which it could be realised. It was expected, for instance, that the results of capitalist experience could comparatively soon be secured for the proletariat by handing over the factories to the workers; the difficulties involved by the traditional organisation of industry were under-estimated; decrees and other external measures would, it was believed, soon change existing conditions. The ideal was the speedy establishment of a social and political order based on communal units of production and consumption. These

producers' societies would gradually determine the entire structure of the state. The sketch drawn up by Lenin in January 1918 runs as follows: 'The basic cells must be the committees of the Soviets for production and consumption to control the purchase and sale of goods. In the cities the same functions must be entrusted to committees set up for each district or block of streets. If local committees of this kind could be set up everywhere, they would form in combination a network covering the whole country, capable of providing for the needs of the entire population and organising production on a national scale. . . . Trade in commodities, whether sale or purchase, would then be carried on solely between the committees, and individual trading would be entirely prohibited.'<sup>6</sup> Projects of this kind betrayed a lack of economic experience and the Utopian belief in the possibility of changing society, indeed, of totally transforming it, at a single blow. They lent colour to the assertion of the Russian Socialist opponents of Bolshevism—for example Suchanov—that the Bolsheviks were anarchists, who wished to replace the state immediately by societies for consumption and production. We must, however, bear in mind that from the outset Lenin insisted on the necessity of learning from experience. In his foreign policy the non-appearance of the world revolution, with its transformation of the imperialist war into a class war, compelled him to conclude the peace of Brest-Litovsk with imperial Germany. And he was equally ready to bow to the actual economic situation by giving up the schemes of the first experimental period, and, when the workers' control of the factories did but increase the industrial anarchy, to replace it by strict discipline and the demand for a larger output.<sup>7</sup>

Naturally, Russian industry did not improve during this period. It must, however, be admitted that the Bolsheviks cannot be held entirely responsible for the

economic and industrial breakdown. The economic life of Russia had collapsed before they came into power. And the collapse had been further assisted by an uncontrolled and anarchic demobilisation and the agrarian revolution which it supported. Even the peace of Brest-Litovsk, by cutting off from Russia the Ukraine and the so-called border states, increased the economic difficulties. Nevertheless, it must equally be admitted that the economic measures adopted by the Bolsheviks did nothing to improve the position. Already in 1918, before the period of civil war had, strictly speaking, begun, the cities were at grips with famine. It cannot therefore be maintained that the civil war interrupted the recovery of industry. Even without a civil war industry must have collapsed utterly, though the war, of course, assisted and accentuated the collapse.

A summary of the most important measures taken by the Bolsheviks will conclude our account of this period of Socialism under the workers' control. The establishment of Socialism among the rural population was renounced by the land decree issued immediately after the Bolshevik accession to power. The fundamental law dealing with land, decreed at the beginning of February 1918, legalised the occupation of the land by the labourers for their use; that is, in practice, it recognised individual peasant proprietorship. The declaration that only the *use* of the land was given to the peasants had no practical significance, so that the Bolshevik agrarian reform amounted in practice simply to the confiscation by the peasantry of the landowners' estates and the estates in corporate or state possession. This was the foundation of the famous *Smytchka*, the dictatorship of the proletariat in alliance with the peasantry. The latter became fully occupied with their own affairs, thus leaving the proletarian Government time for its economic experiments, without danger of being opposed by the peasant population. What were these

experiments? I will quote Krizman's summary, as he gives it in his book, 'Die heroische Periode der grossen russischen Revolution' (second edition, Moscow, 1926):

Expropriation of state capital, i.e. the Bolsheviks take possession of all government property (decree of October 25, 1917, constituting the Council of People's Commissars).

Expropriation of banking capital (decree nationalising the banks, Dec. 14, 1917).

Expropriation of transport capital (decree nationalising water transport, Jan. 26, 1918).

Expropriation of loans, particularly of foreign loans (decree cancelling debts, Jan. 28, 1918).

Expropriation of foreign trade capital (decree nationalising foreign trade, April 23, 1918)

Expropriation of the large-scale industry capital (decree nationalising large-scale industry, June 28, 1918).

To these must be added two further decrees, which, though only issued later, simply completed the decrees of the first period:

Expropriation of internal trade capital (decree nationalising trade, November 21, 1918).

Expropriation of capital invested in small businesses (decree nationalising small businesses, November 29, 1920)

From this summary we might be tempted to conclude—and the thesis has been actually maintained—that a thoroughgoing nationalisation (socialisation) was not expected at once. Krizman points out that although a large number of businesses had been socialised even before the socialisation of industry as a whole, this was in almost every case a penalty for recalcitrance shown by the owners

and managers. For the Bolsheviks, so it is maintained, held it possible to alter the entire regulation of industry by employing the authority of the state, and adopted a policy of socialisation only when the attempt to compel the capitalists to work for the proletarian dictatorship while still permitted to make private profit had broken down. Hence the paradox that, apart from the nationalisation of the banks, socialisation was, so to speak, forced upon the Bolsheviks by external pressure.<sup>8</sup> That this explanation of their policy is more than doubtful is shown by the fact that already in December 1917 Lenin drafted a decree nationalising industry; it provided that all shares should be confiscated by the state. As a means for putting pressure upon the owners and other members of the wealthy classes the decree institutes not only workers' control but a *system* of compulsory labour, a system of workers' ration-books, and the obligation to deposit all capital in the state banks, which would only be permitted to pay out small sums for the purchase of daily necessities. Payments for purposes of production and trade would require the sanction of the workers in control of the business.

Since co-operation on these lines with the former owners naturally proved impossible—and the measures contemplated in this draft decree were to a great extent actually enforced—the system of workers' control led inevitably within a short time to the surrender of the businesses by their owners and to socialisation. For the management and maintenance of factories controlled by the hands was obviously impossible. Moreover, industry had to be brought under some central control. So extensive were the rights accorded to the workers that no trade secret was withheld from them, and the owners were under an obligation to obey their decisions. This amounted in practice to the legalisation of anarchy, and if industry was to be made once more productive it had to be replaced by socialisation,

since, under a proletarian dictatorship, it was of course impossible to abolish the control of the workers and restore the old rights of the owners.

#### WAR-COMMUNISM

This first period of experiment was immediately followed by the period of civil wars. For Pollock, who terms it a period of experiments in state capitalism, it ended in May 1918. But its true close was surely the socialisation of industry in June. In the following period the Bolshevik Government had no leisure for further economic experiments. It had to devote all its energies to self-defence against foes from outside, the various White Armies and the blockade by the Allied Powers. It would, however, be incorrect to regard all the economic measures adopted during this period as simply expressions of the Government's determination to maintain itself at all cost in face of its enemies. Besides the War-Communism in the strict sense—the economic policy dictated by political ends and directly assisting the conduct of the war—there were measures intended to bring the Socialist goal nearer. Pollock even thinks it possible to mark off a definite period (January 1920 to March 1921) during which the Bolsheviks attempted to organise an economic system without private trade and therefore approximating to the socialist ideal; this he distinguishes from the period of 'War-Communism' in the stricter sense (June 1918 to December 1920). Karl Elster, on the other hand, in his study, 'Vom Rubel zum Tscherwonetz,' denies that in the period of War-Communism any measures were adopted that were not dictated exclusively by the necessities of the situation and the efforts of the Government to maintain itself. He insists that 'the War-Communism represented an

economic policy adopted by the Soviet Government solely in view of the civil war.'<sup>9</sup>

The reader might be tempted to regard this controversy as to the nature of the War-Communism as purely academic—a question of terms. This, however, is far from being the case. For if the War-Communism is regarded as solely a strategical move to meet the political emergency, it is impossible to criticise it from the economic standpoint. For its economic measures were in that case forced on the Government from without, and had no connection with its purpose of establishing Socialism. It is intelligible enough that after the event leading Communists should be eager to represent the War-Communism as a political measure, but their explanation is contradicted by the facts. Besides measures adopted to meet special emergencies there were others whose primary purpose was to hasten the advent of Socialism. Krizman had good reason to stress the fact that during the War-Communism the leading economic and industrial positions passed into the secure possession of the Bolsheviki, who utilised the power thus obtained to repeat the attempts of the period of workers' control to organise a socialist society; but these broke down as inevitably as the earlier ones. The student must therefore be careful to distinguish between the fundamental and the merely strategical measures of the War-Communism. It must, however, be admitted that its introduction was due, not to economic, but to political causes.

The occupation of huge areas by the White Armies—by Denikin in the south, Kolchak in Siberia, and Miller in the north—obliged the Bolsheviki to treat the territory under their control as Trotsky described it, as a gigantic fortress to be held at all costs, a centre from which to win back territories as extensive as possible. Economic policy was dominated by the need of provisioning the Red Army.

The most urgent necessity was, not to produce, but to secure the food-supply of the troops. This was the aim of the ruthless confiscations carried out by the Government in every direction, which at the same time completed the demolition of every foundation on which the bourgeois society had rested. But at the same time an attempt was made to organise industry. The industrial council already set up in 1917 to control industry was divided into several administrative departments, called Glauki, centres, each in control of a particular branch of industry. Of a systematic organisation of production as a whole, or even of dividing it up in accordance with a consistent economic principle, there could indeed be no question. For that there was far too little economic experience. The Glauki degenerated into pure bureaucracies, snowed under with documents, and issuing instructions to which no one paid attention. Since they were not obliged to consider the state of the market, no estimate could be formed of their economic productivity. They simply worked with state subsidies; that is, on a basis of inflation.

The Bolsheviks, however, expected this War-Communism to be followed immediately by a period of Socialist construction. This was to be effected by a rigorous application of compulsory labour. Only in return for socially productive work would the means of livelihood be granted. The direct barter of manufactured products for foodstuffs and other necessities of life, which was made inevitable by the complete collapse of the entire economic organisation, the deficiency of manufactured articles, and the difficulties of transport, was not regarded as a temporary necessity, but hailed as the beginning of a Socialist economic system which dispensed with currency. 'We are approaching,' Zinoviev declared, 'the complete abolition of money. We are making the wages of labour a payment in kind; we are introducing free trams; we already possess



free education, free dinners, even if of a poor quality, free housing and free lighting. According to a decree of April 30, 1920, which, however, as Pollock points out, came into force only towards the end of the year, wages were to be paid wholly in kind. The public services—telephone, water, canals, gas, electricity and the provision of fuel and housing—would be free to all workers and members of the staff in national factories, also to invalids and the families of men serving in the Red Army. The system of ration-cards was constantly extended, and it was hoped that the entire supply of commodities would finally be provided by the state and its organisations. As early as 1919 resolutions were passed in favour of replacing a financial system based on currency by the development and firm establishment of taxation in kind. On February 3, 1921, so Hansel informs us, it was decided 'to abolish all money payment of taxes.'

No doubt many of these measures were adopted to meet temporary difficulties of inflation and were intended to deal with particular emergencies. But it was hoped that their success would advance the Socialist goal; that this system of administrative economics, to use Pollock's expression, would produce a fundamental transformation of society in the direction of Socialism. A Socialist organisation of labour controlled by the central authorities would replace the former system of private enterprise based on the principle of competition. The transformation of the Red Armies into labour corps would serve as model for the organisation of compulsory labour. Trotsky worked out plans for changing the trade unions into national organs for undertaking and organising labour of every description. All production was socialised, and private trade was abolished, so far at least as the law could abolish it. By the entire abolition of currency agriculture was to be brought into direct connection with the state-controlled

manufactures. Even compulsory agricultural labour was decreed.\*

The experiments of this War-Communism, however indispensable they may have proved as means for securing the political authority of the Bolsheviks by a concentration of all the national resources, led only to a complete economic breakdown. For they failed to create a productive economic system. Bureaucracy with its unproductive paper achievement celebrated illusory victories. It assumed gigantic proportions, for everyone was anxious to secure a claim to supplies as a civil servant. All activity was swamped beneath a deluge of official forms which rendered the supply of manufactured articles (already very scanty) extremely difficult. At the same time production decreased still further, since the local centres in control of particular branches of industry in default of a general plan, worked against each other. Industry came practically to a standstill, it ceased entirely, or was carried on in a fashion which took no account of the instructions issued by the centres. The prescribed rations could not be supplied. Lenin had held up as a model the economic organisation of Germany during the war; for example, its system of ration-cards.<sup>10</sup> The system functioned even worse in Russia than in Germany. Besides the official state trading, controlled by the bodies set up by the state (the associations), an illicit trade came into existence which by the numbers it engaged considerably weakened the forces available for labour. It maintained itself in face of all prohibitions. In vain did the state employ every means of repression in its

\*'The 18,000,000 farm holdings of Russia were by the terms of this decree socialised and placed under unitary control. A sowing committee was set up to see that the cultivation of all land included in the state scheme was carried out as a national duty' (Pollock). The decree was necessitated by the progressive decline of cultivation, as the state authorities took possession of the grain. The peasants refused to produce the grain requisitioned without adequate payment.

power, even the death penalty. According to Krizman the economic system of Russia during the civil wars of 1918-1920 is marked by the progressive division into a legal proletarian trade based on barter and an illegal capitalist trade carried on by private individuals \*

The state was unable to realise the promises of its legislation. It could not organise the economic life of the country. Hence the sole practical result of the War-Communism was that the state took control of a small portion of the economic system and thus proved an instrument merely of repression and compulsion, not of economic reconstruction. Without the illicit trade, starvation from hunger and cold would have been universal. Even official bodies were obliged to co-operate with it. The attempt to develop a system of state Socialism out of the confiscations, the compulsory deliveries and labour of the War-Communism led only to a restriction of the power of the state in economic life, an economic disorganisation, and a return to primitive forms of trading which, while ruining the trade based on currency, were in no way superior to the private trading. The organisations set up by the state were unable to satisfy economic needs. Whatever economic control the state succeeded in achieving was obtained only by a relentless use of compulsion. The swollen administrative apparatus set up by its economic policy gradually crippled itself by its own weight. Its component

\*The proportions which illegal trading had assumed is shown by the fact that in September 1918 the contraband traders, the so-called bagmen, brought into the two largest cities twice as much corn as the state scheme had contemplated. On the other hand, only a half of the corn laid down by the scheme had been provided! According to Schirmunsky, owing to illegal trading the official deliveries by and to the urban population during the years 1918-19 amounted only to 52.7 per cent. of the production anticipated and 62.3 per cent. of the consumption. And Krizman, a very favourable critic of the War-Communism, admits that between September 1919 and January 1920 in three administrative departments the peasants bought 54 per cent. of the commodities supplied to them for cash, obtained 35 per cent. by direct barter, and received only 11 per cent from the official agencies <sup>11</sup>

parts got in each other's way, its measures remained on paper, it lost all touch with actual conditions. Even if the War-Communism enabled the Bolsheviks to maintain themselves in power, it was incapable of providing the foundation on which the economic system could be reconstructed.\*

According to Krizman the national income amounted in 1920 to 40 per cent of what it had been in 1913; and this is an optimistic estimate. Elsewhere he estimates the national income as probably 33 per cent. of the pre-war figure. These figures are only intended by way of illustration, and Krizman himself emphasises their inexactness. But they prove beyond all doubt that up to the year 1920 the revolution had produced an extraordinary deterioration in the economic position and the standard of life. It was attributed by the Bolsheviks to the civil war, the effects of the imperialist war, and the attempt to change the economic system with inadequate plans and by employing elements largely hostile to the ruling party, which gave birth to an inefficient bureaucracy.

\*A few statistics taken from Krizman's friendly account of the War-Communism provide an instructive picture of the economic conditions prevalent at this period. The area under corn diminished during the years of the civil war twice as much as during the World War. And the amount of corn produced fell in the same proportion. Before the war the harvest produced 4,774,000 poods, in 1920, 2,944,000. When the figures for 1916 are compared with those for 1920 it will be found that the number of horses had fallen to 75 per cent., of swine to 72 per cent., of cattle to 79 per cent., of sheep and goats to 55 per cent. The number of persons employed in the light industries and handicrafts had decreased from 3,760,000 in 1916 to 1,578,000 in 1920, in the heavy industries, from 3,024,000 to 1,585,000. If we take as our standard the output of 1913, it had fallen in 1917 to 77 per cent., in 1918 to 35 per cent., in 1919 to 26 per cent., and in 1920 to 18 per cent. The output of coal fell from 1,738,000 poods in 1913 to 467,000 in 1920, of sugar from 82,900,000 to 5,500,000 poods. In 1920 there were manufactured only 13 per cent. of the number of ploughs manufactured in 1913.

## THE NEW ECONOMIC POLICY. 'NEP'

The loss of contact between the actual economic conditions and the attempts at state organisation which was the final result of the War-Communism threatened to produce a social and political crisis dangerous to the entire Bolshevik system. The peasants refused to continue their obligatory deliveries of grain. Compulsion broke down. They demanded in payment manufactured articles which could not be supplied. A new revolutionary movement began to take shape, this time directed against the Bolshevik measures of compulsion and the Bolshevik bureaucracy. Of this movement the mutiny in the fleet at Kronstadt (1921) was symptomatic, though it was quickly suppressed. But its watchword, 'All power to the Soviets,' might prove extremely perilous to the Bolshevik party, since it openly called in question its identification with the masses. The Bolsheviks had seized power with the cry, 'Down with the Bureaucracy.' Their government had, however, led in practice to the formation of a new bureaucracy, even more inefficient and more oppressive to the population than the old. Even before the Kronstadt mutiny Lenin had recognised the dangers which the continuation of the War-Communism involved. He turned his back decisively on the methods hitherto employed, and the new economic policy began, introduced by resolutions of the Tenth Assembly of the Communist Party, held between March 8 and 16, 1921.<sup>12</sup>

The new economic policy expressed the perception that the economic policy hitherto pursued—abolition of private trade, state organisation of supply, compulsory cultivation of the soil, grain requisitions—had not corresponded with the actual social conditions, but had been in its main lines enforced by political considerations. It had done good

service as a weapon for suppressing all those groups hostile to the Bolshevik Government which in the period before the official socialisation inaugurated in July 1918 had refused freely to accept the workers' control, or had taken arms against the Bolshevik Government in the civil war. Now, however, the external pressure of the White Armies had been removed; the peasants were no longer prepared to accept a system without private trade, or the compulsory requisitioning of their produce to supply the urban population. The alliance, so essential if the Bolsheviks were to maintain their power, between the peasantry and the party—for both were united by common hostility to the old landowners—threatened to be transformed into a state of enmity. A complete economic collapse was imminent, since state trading had proved wholly incapable of supplying even the most urgent and primary needs. Illicit trading could be permanently suppressed only on paper.

The new economic policy began by openly admitting the actual situation. 'Our earlier programme,' Lenin explained at the Tenth Assembly of the party, 'was right in theory, but impossible to carry out in practice.' What was the essence of the new policy? The trading hitherto illegal was henceforward officially recognised, inasmuch as the peasants were obliged to deliver only a specified portion of their produce by way of tax, and were free to dispose of the rest in the open market. This was to renounce openly the socialisation of trade, the complete control of the economic system by the state. It made no practical difference that at first only local trading was permitted, and that it was not until autumn that trading throughout the whole of Russia was once more made legal. The admission of free trading altered the entire economic policy hitherto pursued. Such an alteration is admitted by utterances of Lenin himself. For example, he explained to the Tenth Assembly of the party that the resolution of the Ninth Assembly in

favour of the complete state organisation of trade and industry had assumed 'that our movement could go forward in a straight line. It has, however, been proved, as it has always been proved by the history of revolutions, that the line of advance takes a zigzag course.' Lenin proceeded to bring forward a number of measures which he designated as 'steps backward.' The new economic policy constituted a fundamental alteration of the previous economic policy, though it must never be forgotten that the final goal was not abandoned or in any way modified.

The so-called NEP bourgeois, the middleman or trader, now came into existence. The socialisation of small businesses was superseded by leasing them. The NEP obviously amounted to the reintroduction into Russia of an economic class of private traders. This was shown by modifications in the code, bestowing on them a measure of legal security, as also by a relaxation of the censorship. Scientific publications of a non-Marxian description seemed once more possible. Even socialised industry and commerce was obliged to conform to the condition of the market and to work for profit. A reform of the currency described in detail by Karl Elster—the introduction of what was called the Tchervonetz—re-established it on a secure basis.

That the NEP did not signify a final abandonment of the economic and social aims hitherto pursued is shown by the maintenance of a number of Socialist achievements, as they were termed. The machinery of government remained securely in Bolshevik hands. The very speech in which Lenin introduced the new economic policy had emphasised the safeguarding of 'political interests.' The substitution of the Ogpu for the Cheka by no means represented a return to the juridical bourgeois state, a modification of the absolute dictatorship of the proletariat unlimited by any laws, the dictatorship of the Bolshevik party; state ownership of

the large-scale industries was continued, even if it was reorganised in the form of trusts and syndicates. Nor was the state monopoly of foreign trade given up—a powerful weapon of economic control. A campaign of propaganda and of social repression was systematically organised against the NEP bourgeois. He was indeed permitted to make profit, but since he enjoyed no political rights he was held up to contempt by every weapon of public defamation. It was precisely at this juncture that a number of eminent bourgeois publicists and thinkers such as Berdyaev and Lossky were driven into exile. An energetic campaign was carried on against all attempts to represent Bolshevism as a movement of national emancipation. Ustrialov, the leader of the Smenovechovzy—former members of the White Army who now recognised the victory of the Red Army as a national victory, the deliverance of Russia from western Europe, and the birth of a new Russian empire of Asiatic orientation—was most bitterly attacked and repudiated.<sup>13</sup>

The period of NEP was intended as a pause in which the nation could recover its strength, an instrument for the reconstruction of economic life. When it began Lenin declared: 'The supply of manufactured articles to the peasants in purchase of their produce is, of course, a dereliction of our programme and therefore in itself wrong. But a pause for recuperation is indispensable. The people are too exhausted for any other method to be practicable.' The new policy was designed to stimulate crippled industry, secure foreign support, and free the country completely from the heavy hand of the economically inefficient War-Communism. But all this was to be effected under the wary supervision of the dominant Communist party. Of a new political policy there was no question. The key positions of economic society—among them all the departments of government administration—must remain in Bolshevik



hands. The new economic policy was used to strengthen the power of the Bolsheviks over the state. The party was no longer satisfied with the supreme control; it had to fill all the most important posts with its adherents.

The Bolshevik had now to set about acquiring as quickly as possible the competence which the novelty of his rule and the state of universal anarchy prevalent during its opening months and throughout the civil war had hitherto prevented him from acquiring. He had to become a practical man. The mistakes made during earlier attempts were carefully studied. The lack of a comprehensive plan, of a sufficiently broad industrial basis, was recognised. Lenin declared the most urgent task to be the execution of a scheme of electrification which had seen the light even during the civil war. The electrification was to be the beginning of a bond between state industry and the peasants who had hitherto lived in individualistic isolation. The body of officials in charge of the electrification gradually developed into a body invested with comprehensive industrial control. Industry began to be systematically regulated and supervised. As it recovered, the liberties conceded under NEP were revoked piecemeal. Concessions to foreign companies, which must be made typical examples, were subjected to ever-increasing restrictions. The private traders, whose prosperity and numbers were increasing, were attacked by a crushing taxation, levied not for fiscal but for economic purposes. They could not be allowed to make good at the cost of the Socialist element of society. Preparations were therefore made for delivering the Socialist attack.

The new economic policy, a compromise between the state regulation of industry and the permission of free trading extorted by practical necessity, could not permanently continue unaltered. Private trade had proved strong enough to impose its economic law upon the state. The

price of goods had to be lowered, whether the reduction suited the Government's fiscal arrangements or not. On no other condition would the peasant deliver his grain. The state foreign trade became increasingly dependent upon the market in grain, so that at a party meeting in 1926 Kamenev could declare: 'We are governed by the Kulak.' For the market in corn was controlled by the wealthy peasants, the Kulaks, who, being better furnished with implements and beasts of burden, had secured a predominant position in the villages and imposed their wishes upon the peasants of more moderate means (*Seredniak*) whom the Government favoured. We must, however, remember that the agrarian revolution had led to an increase in the number of those owning land and a diminution in the size of individual holdings, so that the Kulak could not be compared, for example, with a wealthy German peasant.

The economic development, therefore, threatened to weaken the power of the state. Powerful economic classes grew up, the Kulaks and their urban counterpart, the NEP bourgeois traders, or tenant owners of small businesses. They possessed, it is true, no political rights; even if the Kulak could make his power felt in the village Soviet, he could not make his way into the central organs of the party and the state. Economically, however, they played a decisive part.

These developments faced the Bolshevik party with the alternative either of accepting them or attempting to combat them by an energetic policy of state Socialism. Isolated measures of repression and defence against the agents of private trading would be useless. It would be necessary to embark upon a definite line of action which would determine the entire development of the economic and social system. If this policy were to succeed it must not be satisfied with stemming the further advance of private

trading, as was done by the state monopoly of foreign trade, which prevented the export of cheaper goods which might compete with the products of the state factories. Positive action must be taken to foster, extend and secure the Socialist element in the social edifice. The Five-Year Plan, which first came into operation in 1928-9, signified the firstfruits of an undertaking on these lines, an attempt to hasten by every possible means the advent of a Socialist society and economic system.

#### THE FIVE-YEAR PLAN

What is the Five-Year Plan? The question can be answered by enumerating its chief objectives. In the first place it is intended to foster the industrialisation of the country by any means available. Factories of every description (in particular for the manufacture of machinery), electric power-stations, mines and the like, are to be opened throughout the Soviet Union—for instance, a new industrial area must be developed in the Urals. And the entire enterprise is undertaken not for economic motives, to satisfy the needs of the population, but as a means of transforming the entire social and economic structure. To its furtherance are sacrificed those industries which produce articles of primary necessity and immediate consumption; at any rate, they are not to be developed at the same rate as the heavy industries. The foundation of industry must be strengthened. The Soviet Union must be rendered permanently independent of the import of foreign machines and manufactured articles, while at the same time adopting the most modern technical methods. A policy of so-called super-industrialisation is the fundamental purpose of the Plan.

Besides the super-industrialisation the Five-Year Plan is also intended to fulfil another object—the deliberate

alteration of the agricultural system that has existed hitherto. In agriculture also the large concern will in future prevail, in accordance with the Bolsheviks' original programme, which for practical reasons had to be postponed during the early period following the October revolution. The system of small peasant holdings is to be replaced by the collective farm, the Kolhos, employing the most modern machinery and covering a large area.<sup>14</sup> These collective farms must not be regarded as centres of Communist production; they are intended to combine the holdings of the individual members into a single unit collectively cultivated. The dwelling-houses are not to be collectivised, neither need the livestock be communally owned. The profits may be divided in proportion to the property contributed by each member; the remuneration is not equal. The Kolhoses, which are based on the distinctively Russian labour association known as an Artel, may therefore be constituted in different ways. In their complete form they are practically indistinguishable from the Sovhoses, model farms run under state ownership and conducted like factories. The collectivisation of agriculture will not only secure the delivery of grain; it will also guarantee a certain market for manufactured products and at the same time fulfil the social purpose of destroying the power of the wealthy peasants, the Kulaks, against whom the Kolhoses have been set up and supported by the resources of a powerful state. The object of the collectivisation is, in the language of the document which prescribes the model for agricultural Artels, a combination 'to build up great collective farms by the employment of common implements and the communal organisation of labour, and thus to ensure in practice a complete victory over the Kulaks, and all exploiters and foes of the proletariat, over poverty and intellectual degradation and the backward conditions of individual cultivation, and to achieve a high level of

collective labour and production.' That is to say, the collectivisation of agriculture is intended to prevent and render impossible the development of an economic system uncontrolled by the state, such as arose during the War-Communism. The same purpose is served by the legal persecution systematically directed against the private trader in the cities. By the close of the Five-Year Plan he is to be entirely eliminated and the functions he fulfils at present taken over by national bodies or other associations for the purchase and distribution of commodities.

The Socialists will not be satisfied with an external control of the economic system; they intend to regulate and determine it in practice, production and distribution alike. The period in which the middle-class expert works side by side with the Communist inspector will be at an end. The Bolshevik will directly mould and direct industry. This has been strongly emphasised by Stalin, who at present determines Bolshevik policy. The Five-Year Plan is to accomplish what according to Lenin should be the aim of the Socialist society—the assumption by the working masses of the control of industry. Initiative must be aroused in them, the spirit of self-assertion stimulated, their technical education improved; and of this development the Bolshevik leaders of industry are to serve as models.<sup>15</sup>

Thus the economic Five-Year Plan is combined with an educational plan. Not only must illiteracy be combated by every possible means, but the entire system of education must be transformed, in harmony with economic interests. The ruling party and the masses in alliance with it must produce their engineers, specialists, and experts. At the same time all groups which oppose the advance of the Socialist society must be liquidated. It is for this reason that the campaign against religion has been pushed forward with increased vigour. In the circles represented by the League of the Godless, the organ of this campaign, it is

hoped that by the end of the Five-Year Plan the people will have closed all their churches. And the schools are being transformed from neutral into openly atheistic institutions, since only an atheist education can be in harmony with the central economic purpose.<sup>16</sup>

How has the Five-Year Plan succeeded up to the present? The answer to this question will provide us with a bird's-eye view of the social effects of Bolshevik rule. In the first place there can be no doubt that in spite of all obstacles it has so far been successfully carried out. Its projects have been actually set in hand. Every effort is made to attain and even exceed the scheduled production. But we must remember that the details of the Plan have not been accurately determined, and that it merely lays down general principles. In many respects it has proved over-cautious, as is shown by the present attempt to carry it out in four years, and by the fact that in certain industries—for example the production of petroleum—two and a half years have proved sufficient. But particular results as measured by statistics are unimportant. The successful realisation of the Plan involves the creation of a particular outlook among the masses. The Plan is regarded in Russia today as the standard by which to measure every phenomenon of public life, as the norm of propaganda and the goal of practical development. It seems to give life a meaning, to render the question of its object superfluous. For it is itself the all-important task. Everything must be subservient to it, and in the absolutist state represented by the dictatorship of the proletariat the significance of this is enormous. To its execution everything must give way. Nevertheless, the execution and fulfilment of its fundamental aims does not involve a slavish adherence to the details of the original plan. In practice it has been found to demand even greater sacrifices from the consumer than were originally expected. This, however, is only a

reason for speeding up labour. The failure of the meat-supply as a result of the collectivisation of agriculture and the wholesale slaughterings it produced served only as a summons to further efforts. The energy of the people is stimulated by the combination of public propaganda and compulsion which is typical of the entire Bolshevik system.

To stimulate production Socialist competitions are organised between individual factories. The ambition of the workers is aroused by public panegyrics, special rewards, and orders of merit; the masses are flattered by emphasising at every turn that everything depends on their co-operation. That co-operation is to find expression in the so-called self-criticism of defects in the execution of plans and in the application of new methods of labour. This produces in industry the same illusion of freedom as the Soviet elections produce in politics. For it is but an illusion of freedom. The self-criticism must be strictly confined within the limits laid down by the general line of action—that is, the orders issued by the party rulers. Anyone who maintains that the possible achievement has been over-estimated is in danger of being branded an opportunist and traitor. It is, however, possible to attack obviously absurd demands, under the banner of opposition to the illusory radicalism of the Left programme. The freedom of the masses is in reality compulsion, for it makes no practical difference whether or no the compulsion is justified on the plea of the public interest and as representing the real will of the people.<sup>17</sup>

Government loans are forced loans subscribed at public meetings. The subscription takes the form of a partial renunciation of wages. It is also given out that to secure discipline in the factories the workers must voluntarily pledge themselves to remain for a number of years in a particular works. The pledge is easily secured by a public propaganda, not easily distinguished from pressure. Unem-

ployment benefit is abolished on the ground that sufficient employment is obtainable, though intolerable conditions have driven the workers out of particular factories or localities—a fact which the official propaganda conceals to the best of its ability. The concomitant pressure takes the form of introducing the so-called social wage, in which the actual wage is lowered, while the services provided for the workers—cheap shops and other economic privileges—are increased. This, however, has the effect of still further weakening the resistance of the so-called declassed, since they have to purchase what they need at the far higher ‘free prices.’ The forcible expropriations of the Kulaks, bound up with the collectivisation of agriculture, have created a supply of cheap labour which differs only in legal theory from forced labour.

It is this combination of compulsion by the state, whether open or exercised more indirectly with propaganda of various descriptions, that makes the real situation so difficult to judge. Failures can always be explained as due to a period of transition and remediable by self-criticism. And self-criticism seems to be fairly frank, but is never permitted to question the general line laid down by the Government.

It is, however, already possible to point out certain defects in the industrial organisation which belong to its essential structure. The chief and wellspring of these defects is the enormous development of bureaucracy. Complaints of bureaucracy have never been wanting throughout the Bolshevik rule, whose ostensible aim is its abolition, and they have not ceased to-day. Ordchonikidze, the president of the Economic Council, has complained that he is being snowed under by letters and telegrams, so as to be incapable of any practical work. No fewer than 84,000 inquiries are addressed to him every day. Nor can this deluge of documents and official figures, which buries reality from sight,



be excused as a temporary evil which will be removed later. For it has proved the universal concomitant of every Socialist economic experiment hitherto attempted. It proves that the alleged economic chaos of capitalism reappears in the Bolshevik system at another point—in the working of the Socialist economic machine, in the control and guidance of production and distribution.

The Bolsheviks, of course, do their utmost to react against this bureaucracy. But it is firmly rooted in their system as a whole. How can the individual factory and its plans be co-ordinated with the general plan laid down for the whole of industry? Since failure at any one point endangers the entire plan, it is everybody's object to prevent failure in his particular business, so as not to attract unfavourable notice, or be charged with sabotage or red tape. The Red manager now in such demand, who must be guided in the conduct of the business by economic considerations and can no longer, as in the War-Communism, look to the state for support, is in danger of being turned away penniless if he fails to make good. He must do his utmost to deliver the prescribed output, produce 'striking figures,' advertise himself, even though the publicity and advertisement are unsupported by facts. Hence an interest in misrepresentation, which in turn fosters the bureaucracy and red tape that it is so essential to combat by every possible means. But the sole weapon available is an unremitting political pressure, which expresses itself in the constant threat of public self-criticism, and the danger of coming into conflict with active elements among the workers which enjoy the favour of the party. This, however, does not necessarily lead to a genuine increase of initiative, but, on the contrary, compels its victim to invent new devices for evading the pressure and adapting himself to it. That the paralysing effects of an excessive criticism by the active workers has not escaped the notice

of the party leaders is proved by the instruction issued at the end of March 1931 by Molotov, the president of the Council of People's Commissars, and Stalin, restricting the activity of the so-called mass brigades, who, moreover, often voice their criticisms in the Press.

The inherent self-contradiction of the system, which continually develops a luxuriant bureaucratic growth, consists in the attempt to compel initiative from above. Compulsion can secure only the pretence of initiative, the repetition of a particular phraseology, the creation of an illusion which veils and conceals the real economic position: it gives birth to an unproductive bureaucracy employing a novel terminology and procedure. State control can never keep pace with its growth. Hence the Bolsheviks have constantly been obliged to create new administrative machinery. For example, in 1930 a special body was instituted to supervise the execution of all official instructions. Thus the struggle against bureaucracy has produced more bureaucracy.<sup>18</sup>

#### THE ACTIVATION OF THE MASSES

The Five-Year Plan is before everything else propaganda to stimulate the people. It is by no means adapted to serve as a universal plan determining the details of supply and industrial organisation. Even if it is fully carried out, and indeed exceeded—and despite all financial difficulties that is a very distinct possibility—the superiority of its industrial methods will not have been proved. It is intended to serve two purposes: to compensate by the pressure of compulsion for past failure to develop the resources of the country, and to transform the entire outlook of the people. It cannot claim the sole credit for the gigantic achievements it has undertaken. It is intended—as Stalin expresses it, copying an utterance of Lenin's—to free Russia

from the backwardness that puts it a hundred years behind western Europe and America. Its economic success must be ascribed to Russia's possession of inexhaustible mineral wealth and an unlimited supply of docile labour. The truth of this explanation is shown by a comparison with the rapid rate of Russia's industrial development before the War. When this is taken into consideration even the gigantic stride of the Five-Year Plan no longer seems so marvellous, compared with the industrial achievement of western Europe or America. On the other hand, the Bolshevik rule undoubtedly renders the process of industrialisation easier and more rapid. It can be pushed forward unhampered by vested interests or other traditional obstacles, and assisted by a hitherto unexampled governmental pressure, exercised over the entire population and forces of production.

We must, however, remember that besides the central control with its relentless procedure the Five-Year Plan is distinguished in another important respect from the industrialisation which began under the old régime. The Bolshevik industrialisation appeals to the self-respect of the masses. They are not simply to be employed as its passive material, but are to be its willing agents. They must, therefore, be impregnated with a new mentality, even if their actual treatment at present resembles very closely despotic command. The technically 'accomplished' worker is the ideal of the social education which the Bolsheviks push forward by every means in their power. The men and women of the proletariat must give themselves whole-heartedly to their work. The old patriarchal methods of management, which left the worker no responsibility, must be scrapped. Only thus can there be formed a body of workers endowed with the requisite technical qualifications. Only thus will it be possible one day to dispense with the employment of foreign experts, and to

make the Russians a nation of industrial leaders instead of a nation of pupils. The endeavour to create in the old Russia an educated and technically skilled proletariat was faced by a mountain of traditional prejudices and deeply rooted institutions which made their education impossible. Even the expert engineer, as Stankov's embittered reminiscences prove, was not received by society on an equal footing, if he came from the people, the peasantry, or the lower middle class.

All this must in future be changed. The entire outlook of society must be determined by the recognition of industrial and technical interests as supreme. At the same time the opportunity of rising must be afforded to the lower ranks. Faith in the creative capacity of the masses is a fundamental dogma of the Bolshevik creed, as also the identification of Bolshevik rule with the rule of the proletariat. Hence the industrialisation of Russia by the Five-Year Plan coincides with the Bolshevik attempt to raise the dignity of labour. Social work decides social position, in theory at least. Everything is subservient to the working masses. The Bolshevik party only rules because it is the brain of the masses, the advance-guard of the proletariat. All state institutions are directed against the existence and formation of social groups independent of labour, or political and social service. It is with this object that the Bolsheviks have destroyed tradition, property, and respect for birth. The accumulation of wealth was indeed made once more possible by the new economic policy, which even restored inheritance, but it is branded with the disapproval of society and its position is extremely precarious. Only immediate social service must be taken into account. Hence the social stigma attaching to riches, and the war of annihilation waged against the surviving independent class, the Kulaks.

That this mass education, made possible and fostered

by relentless terrorism and the exclusive possession by the ruling party of every organ of publicity, has been extraordinarily successful is undeniable. It has indeed produced a general lowering of intelligence, for differences of intellectual standard are no more permissible than differences of outlook. But it has also aroused forces hitherto dormant. These are not always, of course, the forces contemplated by the theoretical exponents of the new mentality; but even a purely negative and parasitical activity differs from the old Russian passivity.

At the least a mask of socially useful labour must be assumed, for the danger of ruin is never absent. Cleinov relates in his work on the New Siberia how the Bolsheviks appoint to positions of leadership a representative of classes hitherto oppressed. They make use of 'his knowledge of local conditions to build up the Socialist edifice, or it may be only to secure their own power. He rules autocratically until the officials in control find a substitute who has won their favour and seems suitable. Then the man who but yesterday enjoyed their confidence must struggle for his existence; he must prove that he has profited by his practical experience in the position into which chance thrust him. If he can prove his competence, well and good; if not, the unfortunate confidential agent provides material for a propaganda trial. Drink, abuse of authority, favouritism towards relatives are the cliffs on which his bark is infallibly wrecked, as soon as a better substitute can be found.'

The Bolshevik state is a state which employs force with unrelenting brutality, and not one of those whom it has favoured and raised can be sure that tomorrow he may not suffer in his turn. Hence a constant unrest and insecurity, which lead to a semblance of activity, and a universal delation which everywhere discovers counter-revolutionary activity or opportunism. Differences of opinion on indus-

trial or economic detail—for example, whether the town of Magnitogorsk should be built on the left or right bank of the River Ural—are treated as matters of principle, and those who wish to push their way into prominence accuse those who hold a different view of sabotage and wilful wrecking. The universal insecurity combines with the demand for independence on the part of the masses to produce a pretence of activity which cripples all positive achievement. No doubt, besides this pretence a genuine determination to rise and succeed is often aroused and developed. That determination, however, must be directed and confined to particular aims. It must be given definite tasks, and that is today the chief significance of the Five-Year Plan.

The ruling party and its leaders expect to modernise Russia by the Five-Year Plan, and to make her economically independent. 'Russia has always been victimised,' Stalin declared at a meeting in Moscow of the Red Directors; 'we intend to make her independent.' The expression 'Socialist fatherland' which he used on the same occasion clearly reveals the foundation of the new outlook. The Socialist fatherland, the Soviet Union, appeals to the masses as the holders of power and gives them chances of improving their position denied them hitherto. If forcible compulsion must be applied, if there are many glaring lacunæ, if the land of the Five-Year Plan is still a land of great scarcity, it is all the fault of Russia's backwardness. 'We must catch up with America and outstrip her' is the slogan characteristic of this point of view; Russia is to be economically the most advanced country in the world. The Five-Year Plan is a proof that the programme will one day be fulfilled. 'We have no over-production leading to a general economic crisis, no chaotic markets, no unemployment; our industry is growing at an incredible rate, which no other country in the world has known' All these declara-

tions of Bolshevik leaders are typical of the attempt to create a unique self-confidence in the population of modern Russia. This is the key to all the efforts to render the masses more independent—adult education, the attempt to turn ordinary workmen into engineers as quickly as possible, the honours paid to the Commissar for war and the navy, Vorochilov, who is a living example of the career open in the Soviet state to an uneducated labourer, the threat of a watchful supervision by the masses suspended over the head of an untrustworthy technical intelligentsia, and the control of all plans by so-called counter-plans drawn up by the factory hands.<sup>19</sup>

Nevertheless, the masses have not attained their goal, the efficient organisation of a proletarian rule. They are still uneducated; they have not yet outstripped the West and America. Force must come to their assistance. Terrorism and the suppression of all views that make the industrial advance more difficult, whether they proceed from the bourgeois and Socialist parties or from Bolshevik critics of the general policy, the constant repetition of the same slogans till they become lifeless clichés, are proofs that the dominant attitude is one of repression, the war mind of those who feel their existence at stake. Only a rigorous pressure can move the backward masses, and the system accordingly has become a system which seeks to eliminate everything except political and industrial activities. Only politics and economics have the right to exist! To this war-cry all intellectual culture and personal liberty are sacrificed, so far as it is possible to destroy them by political and social oppression.

With ruthless logic everything is subordinated to the political and economic goal. 'Racial minorities can be completely wiped out if, like the German colonists on the Volga, they represent a social class inimical to the régime, through the predominance among them of wealthy

peasants. Thus, for all the Bolshevik professions of belief in national freedom and self-determination, the class war violates even the rights of nationality. And those peoples are the worst sufferers, as Cleinov points out, who have attained a national self-consciousness and have come under the influence of European culture. For among the Germans and Poles there is naturally a larger element 'with a bourgeois attitude' than among the 'aborigines' of the north, who have still to be educated to self-consciousness. The Government rides roughshod over national traditions, as is shown by the fact that it regards the nation as simply a linguistic community in which the proletariat must rule. Its action is dictated solely by considerations of political and social opportunism. The Bolshevik attempt to transform society may be summed up as a systematic terrorism, which at the same time emphasises the value of mass propaganda. It has been made possible by the backward condition of the old Russian empire, where the vast mass of the population was completely passive, and an exotic and artificial culture without root in any national tradition had grown up in narrowly restricted circles. The Bolsheviks are fusing the masses into a unity, having first made the old culture impossible by annihilating or altogether excluding from public life the classes that determined it.

#### THE SIMPLIFICATION OF LIFE

By the ruthless employment of force Russia is to be made a modern industrial state controlled and administered by the proletariat. This object determines the entire economic and social policy of the Soviet Union. The very fact that Russian industry and society were in such a backward and primitive state has afforded the most favourable conditions for this process of compulsion and education. It has



made it possible for a small but well-organised group to take possession of all the levers of economic and social development, for the traditions confronting it were insufficiently developed and based on no real sanctions; they could not command the allegiance of a strong body of adherents, and were, therefore, not in a position to meet an attack addressed to man's elementary instincts and equipped with the technique of modern propaganda. Any external failures could be ascribed to the insufficient preparation of the masses or their lack of experience; had not Lenin insisted from the beginning on the education of the masses as one of the most important tasks of the Bolshevik Government? The enlightenment of the masses is, then, one of the first objects of the Bolshevik policy; the masses must be educated to form a modern industrial proletariat; every possible step must be taken to destroy illiteracy. The Five-Year Plan is dependent for its success on large masses of technically skilled labour. It is not enough to build factories managed by foreign experts; the necessary steps must be taken to ensure that they continue in working and increase in number. Everything possible must be done to spread technical knowledge. For the day must come when Bolshevik industry will be no longer directed, as at present, by bourgeois experts, but by a proletariat educated by Bolshevism.<sup>20</sup> This is the object of the network of technical colleges and polytechnics that covers the whole of Russia today. The whole of education is made subservient to economics, for it must go hand in glove with industry, constituting, as it were, a part of the process of production.

This ideal of technical knowledge has radically transformed education. Education no longer aims at producing an educated man. Its object is to turn out an officer in the proletarian army, capable of taking an active part in the civil service, industry or finance. The old universities have therefore been destroyed—transformed into technical

colleges for the education of experts. They are no longer a number of distinct faculties comprised in one university. How thoroughgoing has been the specialisation dictated by industrial aims is shown by the fact that even the technical high schools no longer exist as comprehensive educational units. Nothing matters except the rapid education of the masses, so the former high schools are replaced by a host of special institutes. It is true that institutes for theoretical research remain, but they also are in the service of the Bolshevik policy; such institutions as the Communist Academy, the Marx-Engels Institute, the Institute for Red Professors, are institutions for the study of Marxism and the training of Bolshevik teachers. For the repression of freedom of opinion has not respected learning and science. Scholars or savants who have not subscribed to the Marxian creed have been deprived of their posts. Philosophy has been replaced by sociology and the study of dialectic materialism. Knowledge is no longer an end in itself, but is placed entirely at the service of the social and economic development decided on by the Bolsheviks. There is no independent research; even the old Academy of Sciences must devote itself to the studies required by their economic policy, it has been compelled to elect among its numbers Marxian doctrinaires whom it originally rejected, but whose candidature was supported by the Bolsheviks, and for that purpose the rejected candidates were admitted to a second election. In 1931 it was obliged to expel scholars of world fame, such as the historian Platonov, because they were accused of counter-revolutionary activities. And by placing its co-operation with the Five-Year Plan in the forefront of its programme it must become an instrument of Government propaganda.<sup>21</sup> This is another proof that publicity has been totally commandeered by the Bolsheviks. Every educational institution, every source of information, is a tool in the service of political

and social aims. It is obvious how powerful must be the means of propaganda at the disposal of a ruling party and its policy, when it has conscribed for its service every branch of learning, every channel of education.

The consequence is an unexampled simplification—a cultured western European might be inclined to call it a barbarisation—of life. A very simple system of principles has been set up, by which the whole of social life and all intellectual activities must be regulated. The economic system and the proletarian state are the sole realities; to their security and progress everything must be subservient. There is nothing which transcends the economic and political spheres. The Marxian creed, the theoretical foundation of the ruling party, which justifies and supports its deification of practical achievement, is the only creed recognised. All other philosophies are regarded as expressions of a social order and a tradition which must be fought by the state machine with every political weapon it is expedient to employ. An entirely novel outlook on the universe results from this conscription of publicity for a creed proclaimed as alone producing happiness (in the crudest sense of the term), and from the social and political realism based upon it, for which practicable success is all in all: all man's capacities and faculties minister to economics and politics. As we shall see, this is in complete harmony with the Marxian theory. And the outlook even of those who have no knowledge of the Marxian philosophy is being radically transformed.

A system of ethics has been evolved in which everything is regarded and determined from the economic standpoint. 'It's good for industry. It helps the Five-Year Plan'—there can be no higher praise. 'As a Communist he has shown himself unworthy of the party and its work'—there can be no more damning criticism. The entire world is seen through Communist spectacles. The Press knows no other

point of view; everything is judged by this standard. You have only to read the Bolshevik newspapers to see at once that it is impossible to get from them any clear idea of the conditions in other countries. You read only of strikes, revolutionary congresses, and the brutalities committed by the capitalists and their representatives. Nothing is related simply as news. Everything is written to support a particular view of life and in the service of a particular social movement. This is equally true of Russian news; that also is hardly ever pure news. The newspaper is the organ of a political and economic propaganda. It gets up Socialist competitions, supports the formation of labour brigades to set an example, censures backward industries, appoints correspondents in the villages and among the workers, who are to spy on every department of life; but a news service in the proper sense it does not possess. It desires not to report the world, but to mould and alter it. It therefore functions as an actual part of the state machine, an organ of the self-criticism which calls the leaders' attention to failures; and by its host of workers and village correspondents it constitutes a link between the party and the masses.

The official philosophy naturally excludes any intellectual independence. It is taken for granted that beside Marxism there can be no other truth. And Marxism is authoritatively interpreted by the ruling party and its political and economic achievement. Everything is judged from the standard of this so-called general line of policy; that art alone is justified which serves the general line; all purely artistic motives are excluded on principle from literature, and only purposive art may exist, art that is the expression of the social development, and promotes that development as desired by the Bolsheviks.

We may grant that work of high merit may be achieved even under these conditions; the Russian film is a techni-

cally accomplished expression of the outlook which sees in politics and economics man's ultimate and supreme activity, which celebrates the class war and exposes the exploitation of the masses; novels and poems may be composed that voice with living utterance the advance of the masses and their faith in technology and industry. Bolshevism has succeeded in commandeering all the faculties of man and may thus release on occasion his dæmonic powers <sup>22</sup> But we must not forget that all this is achieved at the cost of life's variety and multiplicity; in short, of man's humanity. The individual is extinguished and suppressed systematically and on principle. His sole activity must be political, and that only within the limit of the general line of policy. His horizon is fatally restricted. The sole avenues are technical and political, and they are predetermined, even so, by fixed catchwords. From the outset all understanding for anything beyond these, for anything which cannot be forced into these moulds, is excluded and doomed. When society and economics are everything there is, of course, no room for religion, for religion withdraws men's mind from these things, and interests them in worlds where earthly society and politics are not the sole realities. Nor is there freedom of opinion and discussion, for this might shake men's faith in the self-evidence and superiority of Bolshevism. Everything must be squeezed from the outset into the terms of a particular ideology, otherwise it would be useless for Bolshevik propaganda. No doubt labour can be speeded up by these methods, and a homogeneous outlook widely spread among the young—but in every case at the cost of the true man. The Bolsheviks will, of course, reply that their object is precisely to substitute the true man for the parasitic man, who squanders his energies on unprofitable aims and accepts, supports and justifies the exploitation of the masses. But it is sufficient to observe the actual state of Russian

society to be convinced that the Bolshevik view of man as a purely economic animal produces social diseases of the most deadly kind.

#### THE RESULTS OF THE BOLSHEVIK SOCIAL POLICY

The mechanisation of life, the enthronement of Bolshevik politics and economics as omnipotent powers that decide and regulate everything, and the government of society from above by the compulsion of a central authority, have only transposed the anarchy which the Bolsheviks desire to remove. All the evils which Bolshevism combated recur in other guises. A new type of social parasite has developed—the party robot who slavishly moulds himself on the party pattern, repeats its phraseology with more or less skill, and uses it as a ladder for his own advancement. The Communist bureaucrat is a mere repetition of his predecessor, though he is often without his expert knowledge, and his authority is less restrained by laws or extraneous considerations. The establishment of the Bolshevik creed as the sole truth which may be taught and propagated leads to a devotion to practical work which is often purely external and of the crudest description. All independent ideas are excluded *a priori*—for even when they proclaim themselves Marxian and Bolshevik it is a simple matter to reject them without examination as a departure from the general line of policy. Letter worship of the worst description holds the field, though we may well doubt whether it will be found permanently possible to satisfy the people's thirst for knowledge by a literalist orthodoxy which substitutes for independent thought an array of texts from the canonical writers Lenin, Stalin or Marx. In consequence there is a gradual return to the old relationship between the long-suffering masses (still, despite all propaganda, held in a state of passivity) and a body of active leaders—a relation-

ship which, in view of the fact that the party is professedly representative of the masses and their advance, must in the long run make the entire system ridiculous. Finally, the thoroughgoing reconstruction of the intellectual and social edifice produces the point of view which overestimates external measures and means. Everything, it is believed, may be achieved by force, threats of punishment, propaganda and resolutions. But in reality the old relations continue beneath the mask of compulsion and advertisement. The old Adam goes his way only the more freely, abusing the emancipation of women for sexual lust, exploiting proletarian birth to push forward a successful career, and employing party membership to secure personal advantages.

Such behaviour and abuses, it is true, are repressed with special severity, as is proved by the trials of influential members of the party for sexual excesses. But is external compulsion sufficient? It demoralises those who employ it. It becomes the decisive weapon in the struggle for political and social power. The education of the masses becomes the imposition of particular party beliefs and forms of knowledge—or rather of ignorance. Antiquated writings of the Enlightenment are republished as the most modern science. The eighteenth-century materialists are resuscitated, to keep company with Haeckel's 'Riddle of the Universe' and 'The Christ Myth' of Drews. A distinctive human type is fostered which must lead in the end to a new enslavement of the masses, and this in turn will but secure more firmly the fetters of a tyranny which professes itself provisional. That this servile state is distinguished from other servile states by the fact that its government is in the hands of men of proletarian origin is of no practical significance.

It would, however, be a complete mistake to conclude that this deliberate and systematic limitation of human interests and restriction of outlook must bring about the

speedy downfall of Bolshevism. For Bolshevism is the product of a very distinctive social situation and historical development. However cautious we must be in pronouncing on its future prospects we may predict with confidence that the social policy of Bolshevism cannot by any possibility give birth to a system of popular independence and liberty; compulsion of the most brutal kind is of its essence, inseparable from it. Bolshevik rule employs a novel ideology, not hitherto current in Russia, and allows new groups and classes to rise to power. But the rule of these new governors over the masses is no less despotic, however circumspect its language, than the rule of the old, though its aims are entirely different. With blood and iron, by exciting and harnessing the instincts of the masses, shall Russia be transformed, to borrow Eckardt's formula, into an independent province of the economic world. To this object all social changes are made subservient. They are carried out with complete ruthlessness, for the most modern industrial methods are to be introduced among a backward population; there is no time or place for anything besides. With this task to be accomplished, all culture, all intellectual traditions, every problem not exclusively technical or concerned with the social and economic organisation of the country, appears meaningless, something which interferes with the progress of society. Such useless activities are therefore repressed to the utmost by the Bolsheviks. Man's entire powers must be placed at the service of the economic life. Social and economic work, work to support and extend the dominant régime, are invested with a quasi-religious sanction. They are the sole rational human activities.

The Bolshevik system is therefore a system which makes of man a political and social being and nothing more. There must be no province in human life to which its authority does not extend. Man must serve the Bolshevik state and the social order which it upholds with his entire



being. Bolshevism is therefore not simply a sovereignty concerned only with maintaining its own power and ruthlessly employing all practicable means to attain this end; its sway extends further into the depths of individual and social life. Individual and society alike must belong wholly to the Bolshevik order; there must no longer exist an inner and spiritual sphere independent of that order, for nothing which it does not embrace is regarded as possessing any worth, and only that which obeys and serves it has significance or the right to exist.<sup>23</sup> Any compromise with Bolshevism is therefore impossible. For it uses any actual compromises as mere halts to regain breath, rendered necessary for strategical or technical reasons. We must not, therefore, attach too much importance to these halts and imagine that the objective results of Bolshevik rule will never correspond with its Marxian objective, so that our attitude to Bolshevism can be determined by expediency rather than principle.

Its activities may very well lead to the industrialising of hitherto backward regions, but this does not explain the unique claim of the Bolshevik system to possess and shape the entire life of the individual and society. For Bolshevism politics, economics, and social service are not simply particular occupations among others, they are the central occupations determining everything else, the entire content of life. Only when this has been grasped can we fully understand the power of Bolshevism, its relentless brutality, its persistent propaganda, its suppression of all intellectual freedom, and its artificial construction of a distinctive *Weltanschauung* within which the whole of human life must be confined.

## IV

### THE BOLSHEVIK PARTY

#### ITS FOUNDATIONS

As our account has shown, the sovereign power which has determined the political triumph of Bolshevism, the state it has constructed, and its economic and social policy, the power from which there is no appeal, is the party. The Bolshevik party has unfettered control of the entire machinery of government; it wields the authority of the state; it is the master, and even the Soviets are its tools. The party settles the economic policy, and decides what measures must be adopted to transform society in accordance with its wishes. The Soviet Union as a political and social reality is inseparable from the party, for the party is the omnipotent power which controls, guides, and moulds it.

It is absolutely inconceivable that the party should one day be replaced in power by some other group or party. Such a change would be equivalent to the downfall of the entire system. The Bolshevik state is simply the dictatorship of the Bolshevik party exercised in the name of the proletariat. The party is, therefore, not a party comparable to those which exist in a constitutional monarchy or in a parliamentary democracy based on party government. It recognises no other party which could be admitted as a partner with equal rights to share its rule. The original coalition with the Left Social Revolutionaries was a purely strategical measure, ending in the exclusion and political annihilation of the group which had at first been recognised. The Bolshevik party recognises no opposition which might

take its place; if the party no longer ruled, the entire constitution of the Soviet Union would be stultified, even though it is formally constructed on the basis of the Soviets and takes no account of the party. But the mere statement that the Bolshevik system of government is a party dictatorship does not take us very far. It throws no light on the distinctive structure of the party organisation, or upon its outlook and methods. Only a study of the party from the historical and social standpoint gives meaning to the formal and juridical description of Bolshevism.

The early history of the Bolshevik group has been related already in the first and second parts of this work. The Bolshevik party is a group led by professional revolutionaries under a rigorous discipline, accepting revolutionary Marxism as their common platform. It deliberately renounces a vast membership, for it intends to be the van of the proletariat—not the entire army. Moulded by its experiences of illegal underground activity during the old régime, it regards itself as the nucleus for propaganda and agitation among the masses. That is to say, it does not wish to be an *élite* cut off from the masses; it wishes to function as their brain or, to use an official phrase, as their ‘advance-guard.’ Its authority, therefore, rests on a union with the masses, constituted by a series of central bodies. It intends to be a party of action; not like other Socialist parties, a combination of different groups everlastingly at war among themselves. To maintain this unity—in official terminology, the ‘*monolitnostj*’—of the party, its members must accept a strict discipline; only by such discipline can it become the brain of the proletariat and leader of the masses, capable of guiding them to the goals which correspond to their genuine desire without pandering to their passing fancies. Lenin has explicitly insisted that the work of the party is to lead the masses, not to reflect their whims.

The party is at once the representative and educator of

the masses. Its task is so to shape its policy as to know what at any particular time it can call upon the masses to accomplish in order to bring them nearer to the goal. It is never weary of emphasising its proletarian character, its union with the positive, working and productive classes of society.

The Bolshevik party is no debating society for intellectuals, but a party of political action and economic achievement. Its composition is intended to express the double fact that for the Bolshevik economics is the power which determines the whole of human life and that the masses are no longer subjects, but holders of the power of the state. The organisations formed by the party, its control over its members, its recruiting of new members, are means whereby the bond between the party and the masses and its select character are permanently maintained. Care is taken that the proletarian membership of the party should not diminish, but increase. Every election of the Soviets, every campaign of economic propaganda, is accompanied by recruiting for the party. The recruiting serves at once as propaganda and as a justification of the policy followed by the party, which is, of course, the policy of the Government. The public are informed that a large number of poor peasants and manual workers have asked to be enrolled in the party. They are also told that the action of class opponents, rich peasants protesting against the collectivisation of agriculture, anti-Semites appealing to the instincts of the ignorant, and clergy exploiting the religious prejudices of the people and attempting to excite them against the Soviet Government, has aroused the indignation of the best elements of the proletariat and decided them to become members of the party. Such facts surely prove what confidence the masses possess in the Bolshevik party. Even the so-called purgings (*Tchistka*) which have been regularly held in the party since 1920—their extent can be gauged

from the fact that in 1921 no fewer than a third of its members were expelled—serve to maintain, at least as propaganda, this contact with the masses. These purgings, designed to rid the party of unacceptable members, help to weaken the impression among the masses that Bolshevik rule signifies the dictatorship of a party over themselves. It is constantly being pointed out that these purgings are not simply an instrument of internal party discipline. The masses of non-party workers must be interested in them and take an active part in them; their participation counteracts any tendency to independence which the subordinate bodies dependent on the party might otherwise display.

#### ITS DEVELOPMENT

The development of the party into a strong group strictly disciplined for militant action, which, while laying particular stress on union with the masses, is determined not to lose the select character indispensable for leadership, is only intelligible to those who are acquainted with the most important stages of its inner history; they alone can understand the full extent of the powers at the disposal of the party for political action.

It would be an entire mistake to imagine that even its main features as it is today existed from its foundation. Lenin no doubt always emphasised the necessity of central groups of leaders wielding authority. He refused to open the party to camp-followers and sympathisers. This attitude resulted in its constitution as a group which, in spite of all attempts to unite it with other groups, never gave up its separate existence within the Socialist party. But the decisive importance of the party disputes was not yet evident, especially since Lenin's tactics achieved no great practical successes in the revolution of 1905-6, but rather seemed only the manifestation of an unpractical doctrinaire

radicalism that engineered stupid insurrections, which by terrifying the middle class deprived the revolution of indispensable bourgeois support. This failure was followed immediately after the revolution by the outbreak of dissensions among Lenin's followers which seemed to prove that the founder of the party was a man completely out of touch with reality, the fanatical slave of a theory. For they were concerned with Lenin's defence of Marxian materialism against the alleged idealistic attempts of Bogdanov and his followers to rejuvenate the Socialist creed by an infusion of modern positivism, and with his protests against the so-called party school at Capri, of which Gorky was head. Lenin now seemed wholly isolated, his following reduced to a handful of professional agitators in Russia. These fought the established Government with every weapon of underground warfare, from occasional confiscations—the forcible robbery of gold on its way to or from a bank—to replenish the party coffers, to setting up secret presses maintained in activity by dint of great sacrifices.

Nevertheless, the Bolsheviks who had remained faithful to Lenin succeeded in establishing a firm hold among the section of the proletariat which had been captured by Socialist propaganda. They certainly had a greater following than the Mensheviks, the heterogeneous groups of Lenin's Marxian opponents. But it was only after the revolution of February 1917 that Lenin could develop his principles of organisation; not until then was their decisive importance clearly revealed. In his hands the Bolshevik party was transformed into the only powerful and compact group under the new republican system. Party discipline could not, of course, be enforced, since the Bolsheviks were not yet in control of the state. There were dissensions among the party leaders, in which it was only his personal influence that enabled Lenin to carry his views

For example, his declarations of fundamental policy in April aroused keen opposition, as finally his plans for the October rising and his rejection of a Coalition Government embracing all the Socialist parties. Seizure of power by the Bolsheviks, with the control of the Government machine that it involved, led to a rigorous discipline. The discussions about the peace of Brest-Litovsk and the action taken on that occasion by the so-called Left Communists, who were dissatisfied with Lenin's cautious tactics, proved the danger of any relaxation of party discipline.<sup>1</sup> Only if they acted as a unit and were able to place all the instruments of government, such as the army and civil service, under the control of their nominees could the Bolsheviks manage to maintain themselves in power. The civil war and the consequent construction of a new military machine strengthened party discipline still further; the members of the party were mobilised and despatched to defend the Government at any point where it was in danger.

The decisive importance of the fact that the central organs of the party had at their disposition members accustomed to obedience was now manifest. The possession and firm establishment of their governmental authority led to an ever-increasing insistence upon the observance of a strict party discipline. No longer, as in the past, would conflicts within the party merely involve unimportant secessions from its ranks; they would shatter the entire régime. The conclusion of the civil war could not bring with it the relaxation of party discipline, it could only involve its application in a thoroughgoing control of the political and economic machine. Occupation of the government and successful defence of its authority had naturally fostered the party's sense of mission. Its claims seemed to have been justified in practice. The party took energetically in hand the education and guidance of the masses.

As the tasks to be accomplished multiplied, the work of organisation became of primary importance. This is shown very clearly by a document drawn up in 1924 in the early days of NEP, which sets out in detail the party's plans for distributing its human material so as to make the most profitable use of its members. It is to his perception of the supreme importance of this work of organisation that the general secretary, Stalin, owes his power. For a long time he took no part in the political decisions of his party, devoting himself entirely to its internal organisation. He thus secured control of the party machine, and with it control of a political system which under the name of the dictatorship of the proletariat is in reality the dictatorship of the Bolshevik party.

Already towards the close of the civil war there had been revolts against the iron discipline of the party, and therefore against the dictatorship. They found typical expression in Schliapnikov's so-called workers' opposition, which sought to transfer political power to the entire body of the proletariat as represented by the trade unions and co-operative societies. This, of course, would have brought the dictatorship of the party to an end, since the unity of the holders of office would have been destroyed. The Bolshevik party would very shortly have met a fate similar to that of Kerensky's Provisional Government. Lenin, therefore, fought this workers' opposition and its watchword, 'The Soviet against the Party,' by every means in his power.

He did not shrink, it is true, from theoretical discussions of the most searching character, but he had no hesitation in employing forcible measures, such as imprisonment, against recalcitrant members of the party, for he was well aware that only by its united action, to be maintained by prescribing dictatorially the limits within which public discussions were permitted, could the existing Government be maintained. Nor was he prepared to allow the



party to lose its character as a select body; for all its proletarian character, it must not become fused with the masses, but remain their vanguard. For the same reason, in 1920 he resisted Trotsky's attempts to make the trade unions state institutions, and thus forge a link between the party and the masses. For the trade unions and co-operative societies, although under Bolshevik control, were open to those who were not members of the party, and if they were made part of the governmental machine they could be no longer employed to sound the sentiments of the masses. In consequence of the party conflicts occasioned by this trade-union controversy Lenin demanded an even more vigorous suppression than heretofore of all attempts to form factions within the party. Besides the supervision of the entire political machine for which it was created, this repression was to be the special task of the Commission of Control, which was remodelled in 1921 at Lenin's proposal and given a place beside the Central Committee.<sup>2</sup>

These measures, however, did not succeed in putting an end to dissensions within the party. After Lenin's illness, which as early as 1922 made regular active political work impossible for him, these were once more strongly in evidence. They were occasioned by attempts to set up what was called internal party democracy, which by allowing the younger members of the party to come to the front would have weakened the position of its executive organs. Trotsky made himself the champion of this party democracy, which protested against the rigidity that had overtaken the party. But even Trotsky was no match for the party machine, although the feeling of the rank and file was in his favour. The organising section of the Central Committee took effective action. It allotted posts in such a way as to isolate his supporters. Simultaneously it brought into play party purgings and receptions of new members. In particular the so-called Lenin levy (*Prisyv*),

a wholesale enrolment of workers after the death of the founder of the party in 1924, played a decisive part in the struggle.

Throughout the period of internal feuds—at first a struggle of all the other leaders against Trotsky, later of the general secretary, Stalin, against a combination between Trotsky, Zinoviev and Kamenev which ended with the expulsion of the opposition in 1927—the leaders employed methods in complete harmony with Lenin's conception of the party. For Lenin had always placed its unity in the forefront as an instrument of warfare, insisting on the exclusion of all controversies that might jeopardise that unity and the repression of all factions that might cripple its activity, dear as such factions are to the Russian Socialist. With that end in view unity was maintained artificially, Stalin being thus ensured a compact and overwhelming majority in all the party organs and cells. Lenin's method, which had always given the Bolsheviks a decisive influence in the Soviets, was thus applied to the party itself. The opposition, banished from the public eye, could easily be expelled, as soon as it seemed expedient to do so; it was therefore faced with the alternative of renouncing all political activity or submitting to the leaders of the party.

It was an easy task to point out that the Opposition, in contrast to the masters of the party machine, were unable to maintain contact with the masses and express their will. For what other expression of that will could there be than the Bolshevik party? The Opposition could, therefore, be repressed by every weapon at the disposal of the leaders on the ground that it was attempting to set up against the party a second party to take its place. Expulsion was followed by a banishment, which, in the case of Trotsky, was followed by exile from the country. The majority of the Opposition leaders, however, from Zinoviev and Kamenev to Radek, submitted, and have since been employed b

Stalin in subordinate positions; that the death penalty was never employed against them was simply a matter of expediency. Thus, although the Opposition appealed to the authority of Lenin in support of its distinctive views—an objection to an alleged excessive leniency towards the Kulaks; greater emphasis on propaganda for the world revolution, in the belief that it is impossible to construct a Socialist system in a single country; the demand for a more intensive industrialisation; a different estimate of the revolution in China—there can be no doubt that these conflicts within the party imperilled Lenin's conception of it.<sup>8</sup> Whether or no the intellectual superiority lay with Stalin; whether the means he employed against his opponents were or were not moral and humane, is beside the point. Judged from the Bolshevik standpoint, there can be no doubt that Stalin was justified in his employment of political weapons. At bottom the conflict was a struggle for the organisation of authority within the system, even if political arguments of superior practical weight could be produced in support of particular items in the Opposition programme. Moreover, we must not forget the human background of the struggle, especially if we consider the particular questions at stake less important than the struggle for the control of the party organisation between the general secretary and leaders who relied on their personal popularity. For it has had a decisive influence on the development of the type of man that dominates the Bolshevik party, and thus determines its entire system of government. It has also determined the selection of the ruling classes effected by the Bolshevik party.

#### BOLSHEVIK TYPES

To understand this process of selection we must go back to the original types characteristic of the party when first

founded. Two quite different groups must be distinguished and their general features described, if the future development of the party is to be intelligible. Both groups alike were inspired by an unquestioning faith in the political and social revolution which would be produced by the conditions obtaining under the Tsardom, a faith which, as a result of the Russian temperament, the Russian radicalism, and the special situation of the subject races, such as the Jews, Letts, and Georgians, went to the utmost extremes and assumed the most fanatical shape. But that common faith was expressed by the two types in an entirely different way. One type was the revolutionary theorist, a man of letters and an agitator, the other the practical revolutionary, the man for whom the revolution and Socialism represented his only chance of social advancement, the only education he would receive.

The revolutionary theorist and man of letters often springs from the intelligentsia. To this type belong many men and women of Jewish birth to whom the old régime denied sufficient opportunities. These revolutionary men of letters and intellectuals were disposed to make a romance of revolution. They loved revolutionary phraseology, employed ethical arguments for choice, were filled with violent indignation at the barbaric methods of the Tsardom and the inhumanity of its bureaucratic machine. Their ranks have produced many assassins, and it is typical of their mentality that the revolutionary is invested with the halo of romantic achievement. This type has no love for systematic agitation without any visible result, or for the work of practical organisation. Among the exiles it has played a prominent part. Interested in theory, it is self-opinionated, addicted to those interminable discussions which lead to party splits.

Lenin regarded and treated this type as the cancer of revolution. His demand for the formation of a compact

and strictly disciplined party was primarily directed against it. The exiles' chatter—exiles' '*Kloka*,' to use the common Russian expression—was particularly odious to him. And he also rejected that revolutionary phrase-making, of which he thought Kerensky was the typical example in the post-revolutionary epoch, which was based on sentiment, not on a definite scientific doctrine. Hence, even before the revolution this intellectual literary type had proved unable to maintain a footing in the Bolshevik party, as was shown by Lenin's struggles with Bogdanov, Lunatcharsky and other armchair revolutionaries. They only make their way back into the party after the February revolution, when the so-called Meschrayonz, intellectuals belonging to no particular section of the Socialist movement, joined the Bolsheviks. Among their numbers were Trotsky, Joffe, the first Bolshevik ambassador to Berlin, and Lunatcharsky.

Besides the theorist and man of letters the movement produced the practical revolutionary. He has no desire to re-meditate and re-examine the principles of the party to which he has once given his allegiance. For him the all-important thing is practical work, agitation among the proletariat, the establishment of secret presses, the systematic recruiting of suitable members. For his narrow vision, in which he is inferior to the more plastic and sensitive literary type, he compensates by his greater energy and consistency, and his more definite and unambiguous position. To this type belong many who from earliest youth, almost from their schooldays, have devoted themselves to the cause of revolution and can, therefore, even if students, scarcely be termed intellectuals. A frequent and characteristic example of this type is the man who has risen from the humblest origin and owes his advancement to his membership of the party.

The decisive importance of Lenin for the Russian revolution and the victory of Bolshevism is due to the fact that

he knew how to make use of both types for his cause. The radical aims and apparently extreme orientation of the organisation he founded enabled him to obtain the adherence of those intellectuals whose support turns the scale at a crisis. On the other hand, his practical disposition, his insistence on the necessity of learning from experience and adapting oneself to actual life, attracted the practical revolutionaries to his standard. He was indispensable to the party because throughout his career he was successful in keeping the intellectuals and men of action united. On the one hand he preserved the party from the danger of intoxicating itself with revolutionary phraseology, high-sounding catchwords and unattainable dreams, and thereby losing sight of the practical policy demanded by the actual situation. On the other hand, he prevented it from becoming fossilised in an unintelligent bureaucratic routine, wholly absorbed in practical questions and admitting no exchange of views. Neither the revolutionary romantic nor the general secretary was permitted to take charge. To educate the party Lenin made use of its organisation and his dominant position in it, which rested on his personal influence, not on the official post he occupied or on any point of view he represented.

'Lenin the educator'—the description sums up the greater part of his activities after 1917.<sup>4</sup> He utters his warnings against formalism, red tape, the infantile complaint from which the Left Communists suffered, owing to their incapacity to learn from daily experience—a complaint typical of their philistine and tradesmanlike attitude to life, which fluctuated between cowardly panic and a hysterical enthusiasm which over-estimated the possible rate of development. He blames all attempts to carry particular views by adroit sectional manœuvres rather than by convincing arguments and loyal co-operation with committees. He opposes venomous polemics

within the party ranks. He is determined to make the party a training college for men and women who are at once revolutionary Marxians and men of action. It must be the school of the proletariat in which the new classes called to govern will be educated. They must learn to administer, organise, shape the industrial and economic system. The party must produce genuine experts to replace the old bureaucracy, which was without practical knowledge and consisted at best of skilled manipulators of the official machine, by the direct control and administration of the masses, that is of the social body as a whole.

But as a result of this insistence on practice combined with a fixed, if in some respects pliable, creed, distinctive principles of selection became operative in the party when Lenin's control had been withdrawn. The practical emphasis led to the restriction of free discussion, to the predominance of the practical type for whom the philosophy of the party had become a rigid, easily comprehensible body of doctrine which need only be sufficiently general in character to admit and justify all tactical manoeuvres. The secretary secured control of the party—a secretary who was, no doubt, also a remarkably skilful intriguer and therefore able to adapt himself to practical exigencies; but a secretary, nevertheless, who had no new ideas, but organised and applied the old as the master's 'most faithful disciple.' There was no more room for differences of opinion. The conception of the party as a machine for applying compulsion triumphed over all attempts to make it a school of mutual education. The selection of members effected from this standpoint, the supersession of the intellectual by the so-called active corps of old Bolsheviks, the men who had organised and led the Bolshevik party in Russia under Lenin's instructions from exile in conjunction with representatives of the proletariat who joined the party after the revolution, was accomplished on the plea

that it was an application of the principles that had guided Lenin's action: they had to foster the type which was adapted to carry out the daily work of Socialist construction.

There was no longer time for debating theories. There was no more use for the romantic heroes of revolution who had proved so invaluable during the stirring times of the civil war. Now the demands of theory were sufficiently met by the man who could draw up emphatic and simple resolutions suitable for purposes of propaganda, to justify the politics and tactical aims pursued at the moment by the party. What was now required before any other quality was capacity for work and organisation, the temper which aims at solid achievement, not momentary spectacular results. It was not the striking personality that was wanted now, but the man who could work in harness and did not, like Stan, the leader of the young Communist opposition, claim the right to test party instructions by his own experience of their operation.

That is to say, the completely unintellectual, but correspondingly more energetic practical revolutionary finally vanquished the romanticist and litterateur of revolution, who as a man of daring strokes and novelties was invaluable during the period of transition. The former type has determined the present character of the party. It has moulded it into a compact body which by every possible means, from peaceful propaganda to the application of force, seeks to build up the Socialist edifice, and carry out the Five-Year Plan. What matters the intellectual level? An exclusive practicality interested solely in questions of political and industrial organisation is now all-powerful. Theory is valued only by its utility for the economic and political work of every day.

This primitive attitude, this deliberate turning away from all independent thought, this exclusive concern with



economic and political practice, determined as it is by a Marxian purpose and an ideology already fixed in a cut-and-dried formulation, gives the party today its unique efficiency as an instrument of action. It has no more leisure for speculation. Its entire existence is consecrated to work for the practical projects of Socialist construction, which demand its entire time. It may well be that this political and economic activity expresses a lust for power, but the coincidence of both invests the party with a passionate fanaticism. Beyond itself there is nothing; the economic society directed by party instructions is the sole reality.

Hence the de-intellectualisation of the party accomplished under Stalin's leadership has not weakened it in the very least; on the contrary it has only made it more efficient as an instrument of political power. The members now know what they have to do and are no longer confused by public dissensions among the leaders. Anyone who disagrees with the bureaucracy governing the party is disposed of as a traitor to the Socialist state. He is denounced either as a man who, like Trotsky's Left Opposition, befuddles himself with fine phrases, but in reality doubts the capacity of the proletariat to undertake in isolation the construction of a Socialist society in Russia, or as one who, like the members of the Right Opposition, is a defender of the Kulaks, or, like Bucharin, is without genuine understanding of Marxism, a man who has failed to grasp the dialectical foundations of Leninism.<sup>5</sup> Whether the charges are or are not well founded is immaterial; the important point is to turn the publicity controlled by the party machine against its opponent. He is immediately ruined, as an enemy of the general line of policy on which the party has decided. He is worth spending time over only so far as the attack upon him is propaganda for the construction of Socialism, and his mistakes prove the justification of the official policy.

His exclusion from publicity makes it possible to learn from him by making use of his criticisms without the knowledge of the public. In its struggle against the various oppositions the party has strengthened its position, proved its efficiency, and mastered its practical work. Characteristic of the normal type of party member at the present day is the capacity to handle the party machine and at the same time by suitable propaganda to adapt one's language to the accepted phraseology. A man of this type has given a guarantee of practical success in industrial and political work. For the party machine cannot, of course, ever be idle. It must never cease thrusting society forward, reorganising and transforming the industrial and economic system.

#### THE PARTY ORGANISATION

How, then, is the party machine organised, controlled as it is today by men of action, unintellectual, but skilled tacticians endowed with a sense of economic realities and understanding how to manage the masses? Its foundations are the party cells which cover the entire territory of the Soviet Union. They are to be found in every locality, every important factory, every technical school, and every organisation, trade union, or co-operative society. They are responsible for maintaining the activity of the party on the right lines and carrying out the orders of the central authority. Public complaints are made against them and their officials, their 'bureau,' whenever attention is drawn to a failure—to some negligence in work, laziness, or refusal to carry out orders. The cells are combined into districts, which possess a special secretary. The secretaries are indeed elected, but the election is in reality a purely formal confirmation of the choice made by the Central Committee. All appointments are now made by the organising section

of the Central Committee, which has come into prominence since the end of the civil war. Latterly the so-called instructors despatched by the Central Committee to each district to impart the necessary instructions and to control the organisations have acquired an ever-increasing importance. The central organs of government are the Central Committee and the so-called Commission of Control, set up to decide party disputes and remedy any abuses in the working of the party or state machine. Lenin hoped that it would act as a counterpoise to the Central Committee; but it has become a mere tool in the hands of the General Secretary.<sup>6</sup> A new controlling body was set up at the opening of 1931 to see that the decisions of the central executive are carried out by the administrative machinery.

The Central Committee is divided into subordinate committees, among them the important Political Bureau, which has, however, lost some of its importance since Stalin's victory over the Right Opposition. Like the Commission of Control, the Central Committee is elected by the Party Assembly, which at present meets every two years. But this internal democracy is simply a blind for the public, since the Central Committee previously in office and the General Secretariat can determine the composition of the Assembly by making use of their right of expulsion from the party, their power to forbid public discussion altogether, or reduce it to a mere formality, and their choice of the party officials, who in turn can influence the composition of the party cells.

The party leaders control the appointment of the organs of Government, among them the Council of People's Commissars and the revolutionary Council of War, over which the Commissar for War presides. The Executive Committee of the Congress of Soviets and its *præsidium* are simply tools chosen and controlled by the leaders of the party. Every republic in the Federation possesses its

own party, organised on the model of the Federation Party, but the Federation is as much a fiction in the party as in the Constitution of the state. Centralisation is secured in the party machine by the power of the central authority to intervene directly. It is therefore impossible for an opposition condemned by the Federation Party to establish itself permanently in one of the national Communist parties. Nevertheless, difficulties have arisen with the national parties, particularly in the Ukraine and the Caucasus.

Contact between the party and the proletarian masses is sedulously maintained. It is regarded as most important to increase the labour membership, particularly 'workers from the bench.'\* The character of the party as the picked force of the proletariat is to be upheld and the self-respect of the members increased by purgings, expulsions, and apprenticeships whose length is measured by the social origin of the applicant for membership. Offences com-

\*The party possesses its special statistical department, which issues a yearly conspectus entitled 'The WKP' (Russian initials for Communist Party of the Union). In these statistics special prominence is given to an analysis of the members' social origin. According to the statistical year-book for 1928 (Moscow, 1929) the total number of adherents of the Federation Party, members and candidates for membership, exclusive of the Red Army and Soviet representatives abroad, amount to 1,360,469. Of these 832,177 or 61.2 per cent. were workers before joining the party, 570,171 or 41.9 per cent. workers after their entrance. Peasants, before entrance 286,979 or 21.1 per cent., after entrance 169,624 or 12.5 per cent. Government employees, before entrance 222,539 or 16.3 per cent.; after entrance 443,143 or 32.6 per cent. Under the heading 'Remainder' are reckoned 18,774 or 1.4 per cent. before entrance, 141,095 or 10.4 per cent. after entrance, to which must be added 19,793 or 1.4 per cent. of younger employees in government offices. These representative figures prove the dominant position held by the party in the entire governmental and administrative machine. The number of workers and peasants decreases after their entrance into the party, because former workers and peasants become government employees, business managers of village Soviets, managers of businesses, party officials and the like. This is shown by the doubling of the number of Government employees and the striking increase under the heading 'remainder'—which no doubt also includes proletarian students and members of the so-called professions, and experts.

mitted by members of the party which have been held worthy of prosecution are severely judged when they are of a nature calculated to injure its prestige. Efforts are persistently made to prevent the party morale falling below a determinate level.

Action is taken against a luxurious and ostentatious style of living. The income of members is limited, so that managers of factories, and engineers who belong to the party, receive a far lower pay than the bourgeois expert. The discussions on the question whether it is permissible for a member of the party to take winnings from state lotteries are typical of this attitude. As we should expect, the observance of the party code of ethics is often purely formal. A large proportion of the expulsions for regular drunkenness, inefficiency, abuse of official authority, and similar offences, are only carried out as a means of settling dissensions in the party ranks.<sup>7</sup> The limitation upon monetary income is compensated for by numerous social and political privileges, by the opportunity of buying the necessities of life at a cheaper rate, by favoured treatment at state institutions and in the allocation of dwellings. Nevertheless, measures are taken to prevent the growth of a privileged and irresponsible class composed of party members, as is shown among other things by the prosecutions of Bolsheviks who have taken advantage of their position to seduce women.

The party is flanked by a number of auxiliary organisations. Among them we may reckon the Soviets, the 'immediate organs of the proletarian dictatorship,' whose election is always accompanied by the recruiting of new party members. Other auxiliary institutions are the co-operative societies, the trade unions and the Kolhoses, which, although not confined to Communists, are under Communist control, like all associations supported by the Government; for example, the League of the Godless, or the Proletarian

listeners-in. In April 1931 it was decided that only associations pursuing objects in harmony with those pursued by the state should be allowed to exist. The execution of this decree was to put an end to the possibility, hitherto existing in theory at least, of forming associations for purposes determined by individuals, in accordance with their founders' wishes; all associations were now to be openly transformed into auxiliaries of the ruling Communist Party.

Of particular importance for the development of the Party are the associations of youth, to which the authorities accordingly devote special attention. The so-called Pioneers are an institution for children up to about the age of fifteen or sixteen. It is a preparatory organisation for the League of Communist Youth, the Komsomol. The Pioneers devote themselves particularly to influencing the older generation. They are encouraged to introduce the Bolshevik spirit into the family, without the least regard to parental authority or the respect due from children to parents—for the parents' commands must yield to the Bolshevik principles of the Pioneers. How far the destruction of parental authority has gone is shown by the fact that during Ramsin's trial for wrecking, the son of Syntin, one of his fellow accused, wrote to the papers demanding the infliction of the death penalty upon his own father. The Pioneers are taught to interest themselves in politics and economics. They must already participate actively in self-criticism. Their organ, the *Pionerskaja Pravda*, publishes complaints of inadequate accommodation at school, counter-revolutionary teaching, and invitations to the Commissariat for Education to take part in the congresses.

The Komsomol, which contains youth up to the age of twenty or even twenty-five, is the immediate preparation for the party. It is trained intensively for industrial and

political work. To it is entrusted a leading part in the collectivisation of agriculture; from it squadrons are formed to carry out particularly urgent tasks; it supervises the execution of the Five-Year Plan, for example, by removing difficulties of transport or calling attention to defects of organisation; one of its most important functions is to serve as an auxiliary force for the Red Army, it encourages the military training of all its members, so that it may be regarded as actually a militia; during the civil war it took a particularly active part in the fighting.

Although its membership is not confined to members of the party, the Komsomol is closely connected with it. It possesses its own paper, but neither the league as a whole nor its central committee has the right to a policy of its own. The Komsomol is intended to constitute an active group of young people working in the interest and under the control of the party, though attempts to replace it by junior sections of the party have been abandoned. It is designed to give the young men and women an illusion of independence, the sense of being engaged in important activities. Any attempts to exploit the Komsomol in opposition to the general policy of the party and win its support for an opposition are most vigorously repressed. All such attempts have hitherto completely failed, from Trotsky's in 1924 to the attempt of the so-called Right-Left Bloc under Syrzov-Lominadse in 1930, which sharply criticised the execution of the Five-Year Plan, complained of bureaucracy and the falsification of statistics, and demanded freedom of discussion within the party.

All who showed sympathy with the bloc, among them founders of the Komsomol, such as Tchaplín, were simply deposed and expelled from its ranks. They thus shared the fate which in 1926 befell the Leningrad leaders who refused to accept the decisions of the Communist Party

Assembly. The Komsomol is not even permitted to be neutral in these disputes, for it must be an auxiliary force to help the party to carry out its plans—that and nothing more—and its activity must be satisfied by their execution. The Komsomol must provide the most active workers for the Five-Year Plan; there must be no time or opportunity for the individualism which presumes to discuss the orders of the party from the standpoint of the young generation and its outlook. Particular care is taken to protect the Komsomol from alleged anti-proletarian influences. These influences are, it is maintained, represented by the sons of once wealthy peasants, Government employees, and men of similar station, who often join the Komsomol for purely personal reasons; for example, to secure an opening in life, to be able to study. The class enemy within the Komsomol figures regularly in the Communist press. But we must not therefore conclude that there exists a permanent underground struggle between the rising generation and the ruling party. On the contrary, it is precisely upon youth that the Bolshevik usurpation of Russian public life has exerted the most potent influence. The young can hardly conceive of any other world; the Bolshevik ideology has become self-evident to them, and—what is even more important—their active bent is constantly finding new outlets in the innumerable tasks of industrial reconstruction.

A large number of technical schools and institutes serve the party, and minister to the desire of the members of Komsomol to make a career for themselves. Their number has been steadily increasing, since Stalin pronounced the slogan: 'Turn out Communist experts.' The training schools for future teachers and expert engineers are of particular importance, as also the Institute of Red Professors and the Communist Academy, whose function it is at present to control the entire intellectual life of



Russia and appraise it by its relation to the practical work of the Five-Year Plan. The party is also closely linked with the Red Army. The entire youth of Russia and all her workers are to receive military training without distinction of sex. For it is essential to Bolshevik publicity and the justification of their forcible government to keep in the foreground the peril of a foreign intervention in the interest of the bourgeoisie. This imparts a military character to the whole of public life, for the achievements of the revolution must be secured by the military training of the workers. The Red Army is thus used as an educational institution and a training college for propagandists.

Particular stress is laid upon political education, *politgramotnostj*. This *politgramotnostj* consists in the knowledge of selections from the works of Marx, Lenin and Stalin, and the uncritical acceptance of the official ideology and phrases. With the aid of the Pioneers, the Komsomol, and all the educational institutions which are also intended for older people, the ruling party intends to form a new class to lead society. The old experts must be replaced by proletarian experts. That is why at every educational establishment such importance is attached to the class and party of those who attend them, and all who have grown up in an environment alien to Bolshevism are as far as possible excluded. How ruthless the procedure can be is shown by a letter published in the *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, demanding that the daughter of Ramsin, who was condemned for sabotage and wrecking, should be expelled from a technical institute, although she was not personally guilty of any offence. The destruction of the old educational institutions by submitting the professors to examination by the Communist students to test their modernity and their attitude to Marxism serves the same purpose of making the youthful proletariat, believed to be especially sympathetic with the party outlook, the leaders

and experts of the future. Lenin's dictum that the dictatorship of the proletariat is at the same time its education, is thus being fulfilled. First the proletariat seizes the reins of power through its party; next it compels the intermediate class, the technically trained intelligentsia, to work for it; and finally it substitutes for these bourgeois experts an intelligentsia of proletarian origin and sentiments.<sup>8</sup>

The Third International belongs equally with the Komsomol to the institutions for education and propaganda controlled by the Bolshevik party. In theory, no doubt, ever since its foundation by Lenin in 1919 it has occupied a position superior to that of the Russian Bolshevik party. But in reality it is, of course, dependent upon the one proletarian state in the world, not only for such external reasons as finance, the necessity of a country where agitators can find refuge, and the fact that Russia is the seat of its central organ, but because the existence of the proletarian state is of supreme importance for the world revolution. It therefore supports everything that serves the interests of that state and so becomes the political instrument of whatever group controls the Russian party. Attempts of the opposition to secure control of the party by the indirect route of the Third International are doomed to fail lamentably, since the parties of the International are dependent on the support of the Soviet Union, and therefore all opposition movements in the foreign sections of the Communist International are treated in the same way as the Russian.

Like the Russian party, the International is surrounded by a number of auxiliary organisations. These are the Communist International for Youth and the Revolutionary Central Union of Trade Unions—and Communist opposition to the Socialist control of the Freethinkers' International has led to the formation of a special Revolutionary Central Union of Freethinkers in which the Russian League

of the Godless plays a decisive part. These organisations, among which we must also reckon the Red Helpers and the Association of Friends of the Soviet Union, recruit sympathisers who assist and pave the way for the activities of the Third International, protest against alleged calumniations of Soviet Russia and arrange, as, for example, the League of the Godless, correspondence between Russian and foreign proletarians which serves the purpose of propaganda, and gives information as to conditions in Bolshevik Russia. Their entire existence is bound up with the existence of the Bolshevik state in Russia, so that they may be regarded as centres of propaganda for the present Russia, the Soviet Union and the Bolshevik party in control of it. In short, the Third International is an agent of the Bolshevik party, since it makes preparations for the world revolution. Its propaganda aims at weakening the foes of the sole proletarian state, the Bolshevik dictatorship, and crippling the established order by undermining the discipline of the army, by combating the churches and by industrial espionage. It would obviously be impossible for a counter-organisation to the Third International to carry on in the Soviet Union a campaign of religious or anti-Marxian propaganda; its activity would be regarded and condemned as counter-revolutionary and favourable to the threatened intervention of the capitalist powers.

Since the Third International does not form part of the machinery of government, the Government can officially disclaim responsibility for its action. This, however, is merely a legal quibble; only the Bolshevik party, not the Council of People's Commissars nor the Executive Committee of Soviets, is represented in the Third International. When appeal is made to this legal fiction, the actual sovereignty of the Bolshevik party in Russia is conveniently passed over. In their dealings with the bourgeois world, by concealing the real situation, the

Bolsheviks apply without the least scruple the very 'fetishism of legal rights' against which Bolshevism contends. How unimportant the Council of People's Commissars really is in the Soviet Union today is shown by the fact that Stalin does not even trouble to belong to it. He is satisfied with his position as general secretary of the party. He is, it is true, a member of the Executive Committee of the Soviets, but he leaves the presidency of this 'sovereign' body to Kalinin.

#### LENIN

Our account of the structure, development, and organisation of the group which controls the Soviet Union will be completed by a sketch of particularly important and typical leaders of the party. We have often had occasion to speak of Lenin, who founded and led the party, and stamped upon it the character it possesses.<sup>9</sup> Without him Bolshevism in its present form would be unthinkable. Although Trotsky and Stalin, whom he considered the most capable members of the Central Committee, have failed, in spite of his wishes, to work in harness, his example has nevertheless left its impress on every Bolshevik. All sections of the party invoke his authority, from Stalin to Trotsky, the leader of the Left opposition, and Bucharin and Rykov, the leaders of the Right section. If, however, his authority after death seems impregnable, we must not imagine that in his lifetime he governed the party as an absolute dictator. He was continually obliged to meet more or less determined oppositions, from his return from exile to the discussions relative to the October rising, from the heated debates about the peace of Brest-Litovsk, in which he did not carry the day immediately, to the disputes about the trade unions and the new economic policy.

Lenin the educator—in this phrase we have already

summed up his work in the party. His authority steadily grew, because in practice he nearly always proved right. Suchanov relates how Kamenev, after long doubts, was finally obliged to admit that 'Lenin's political judgments have always proved correct.' Radek was accustomed to say the same thing in his slovenly style when he spoke of 'the old fellow's infallibility.' Lenin's peculiarity consisted in the combination of a rigid and even doctrinaire creed with an extremely skilful and pliant strategy and propaganda. He understood how to give his ideas a form in which they were intelligible to the masses. But, on the other hand, he could be extraordinarily reticent as to his own aims.

When on his return to Russia in 1917 he perceived that the time was not ripe for a public avowal of his disbelief in the sovereignty of the National Assembly and his hostility to the war he cleverly shaped his propaganda among the masses accordingly. He was prepared when necessary to submit to party discipline. In April 1917 he renounced his proposal to change the name of the party from Social Democratic to Communist, and in 1918 he yielded to the wish of the majority that the negotiations of Brest-Litovsk should be concluded, as Trotsky proposed, not by acceptance of the German conditions, but by the formula, 'Neither war nor peace'—for he knew that he would get his own way in the end. Actually in 1918 the party changed its name as he desired, and it was found necessary to prevent the advance of the German army by accepting the conditions originally rejected, which were now, as Lenin had foreseen, made more severe.

It would therefore be a complete mistake to regard Lenin as a fanatic determined to carry his point immediately and expecting his proposals to be unconditionally accepted. On the contrary, he loved practical discussions. He did not wish to impose the acceptance of his point of view, but to

get it accepted on its merits. The scraps of paper on which he jotted down brief questions, suggestions, and criticisms are famous. But this adaptability had its limits. Lenin was an educator and strategist only within the limits of an extremely definite doctrine. Marxism and his interpretation of Marxism he regarded as the self-evident foundation of his entire thought and action. He simply wished to gain experience and to learn. The strategy and adaptability were entirely a matter of method, and never led to any radical change of opinion. The very notion of a different belief, a departure from Marxism, was for Lenin wholly inconceivable.

Lenin's Marxism—this must be made clear from the outset if we are to understand his psychology—was marked by distinctive features. Its predominant characteristic was the will to political power. Lenin was not content to wait for the objectively inevitable Socialist development which Marx had predicted; he insisted on the importance of action and strict organisation for the Marxist party. For him the state, with its equipment of compulsion, must be the mid-wife of the Socialist society. He rejected all revolutionary phrase-making. He detested the Second International for its divorce between speech and action. He wanted to make his ideal a concrete reality; for him it was self-evidently a force which drove the believer to undertake the alteration of society. On points of details he acknowledged himself in the dark. 'It is far better to learn from revolutions than to write about them,' is a remark which prefaced his 'State and Revolution,' published after his advent to power, but composed before it. 'Learn and keep on learning,' was his motto throughout his administration; 'learn to govern, learn to select the right men and learn to handle them; never be satisfied with fine phrases and meaningless slogans.' 'Socialism is accountancy,' he

experts, not to surround himself with a following of ignorant revolutionary heroes.

This social and economic training must mould a particular class, and enable it to lead the new society, the proletariat. That the proletariat is the chosen class was as self-evident for the Marxist Lenin, as the right of his party to govern. Belief in the proletariat determined his entire political and economic projects. The new society cannot function smoothly in a day; its birth-pangs are a situation of direst need and stress, it does not come into being of itself; it is not born full grown—on this he was never weary of insisting. It may be that he often underestimated the difficulties of the transition period, especially at the beginning of his rule, but he was never blind to them, and as time went on he laid greater stress upon them. Did he therefore lose faith in the Socialist goal? Did his Marxian creed gradually become a pure matter of form, phraseology employed only to justify his personal power? For such a development there is not a shred of evidence. It was simply that his practical experience made him realise more clearly the need of experience and education. He himself learnt by the experiments he tried.

In this insistence on the unity of theory and practice, which made it possible to find a logical justification for every step he took, Lenin probably gave the clearest proof of his inhumanity. He was thoroughly inhuman in his belief in his creed, in the advent of the Socialist society, in the right of a particular party to hasten its advent by every means in its power, in the vocation of the proletariat to create the new society and therefore to govern during the period of transition. He was unfettered by any consideration of morality or humanity. He had no objection to compelling the bourgeoisie to co-operate with the Communists by wholesale shootings, and by degrading labour, such as the cleaning of latrines, and he regarded terrorism

as a political weapon to be employed when expedient. Friendship, personal considerations and sympathies ceased to exist for him where the cause was concerned. In all this he showed himself proof against pity, but his harshness was inspired by an objective simplicity of purpose so complete that it lends it a human quality.

There are utterances which show an even naïve trust in class instincts, stories of his everyday life which give proof of a genuine love for the masses. Personally he was completely selfless. Without a touch of conceit he regarded it as obvious on purely objective grounds that he and his party should govern as organs of the Socialist society. He appealed to no mission of any kind; simply to the cause. In the cause he merged himself completely, and this is the secret of his distinctive personality. His very passions were governed by the cause; it was not the individual bourgeois that he hated, but the bourgeoisie, not the individual Menshevik, but Menshevism. But his hatred was all the more intense and unrelenting, for as the agent of the great historical revolution which was to establish the reign of justice throughout the world it was his duty to use every means at his disposal to crush every opponent.

This absolute faith in Marxism was Lenin's most human trait, for in this he showed that his roots lay in the Russian tradition. He showed himself a typical Russian intellectual, the fanatic who regards his political and social beliefs as necessary for the salvation of mankind, the religion which will set up the kingdom of righteousness. Lenin did not become a different man when he exchanged a life of exile and privation for the government of Russia. His adaptability was fostered by the necessities of practical administration, nothing more. Hitherto his task had been to secure the orthodox creed and fashion a compact body of followers; now at length he had to put his theory into



organisation had provided the sole opportunity. By this insistence on practice he distinguished himself from the Russian intellectuals, and proved himself the one man who could link them up with the practical revolutionaries and combine both in the same group. By this excessive practicality he produced a commonplace, everyday, even philistine effect. He loved to appeal to sound common sense, to mock at eloquent declamations and rhetorical flights. To these characteristics he owed his effectiveness as a model for the masses. He was not only the teacher of the true faith, but also the man of action, of the daily task. It is under his influence that the Soviet Union has become a nursery for the practical man who has no turn for the speechifying and debating so dear to the Russian intellectual, for the man who is not lazy and averse from action, but one who prizes hard work, and whose sole interest is to master, organise and carry out efficiently the economic and industrial tasks with which he is faced. This was the type of man that Lenin praised and held up to admiration as the ideal Socialist. In the disciples, however, the type is expressed far more crudely than in the master. They lack the personal greatness and genius of Lenin, for whom the insistence on practical work had been a deliberate self-discipline, not the result of a contracted vision due to external causes, insufficient experience of life, or want of cultivation.

It is not altogether easy to discover from Lenin's biography the causes which determined this combination of a fanatical devotion to his cause with the employment of immoral and inhuman methods. His life is entirely devoid of striking or romantic episodes. As soon as he had completed his studies this son of an inspector of schools became a professional revolutionary and one of the first founders of Marxian associations among the labourers of Petersburg. After the usual banishment to Siberia he lived as an exile

abroad. Only during the revolution of 1905-6 did he return secretly to Russia. His second return in 1917 was the prelude to the rising by which he seized power. During the years of exile he led the party formed in 1903 under his influence. He was indeed its only brain, since intellectuals could not long endure his dictation and intolerance. His bitterly envenomed polemics were as famous as his apparently unpractical radicalism. It was only after 1917 that he ceased to be regarded as a man of no practical importance, the head of a Marxian sect, and stood revealed as a political leader of genius. He was happily married, affectionate and human in his relations with his friends, very modest and opposed to revolutionary affectations of dress or behaviour. As president of the Council of People's Commissars he showed no appreciation of the new art championed by Lunatcharsky, the Commissar for Education. His favourite authors were Zola and Jack London. He would have made a good professor. Miliukov, the leader of the Cadets, tells us that Lenin gave him the impression of a scholar obstinately defending his thesis.

Two events may, however, be pointed out as possible explanations of the fanaticism and immorality of his political action. One is the execution of his elder brother for taking part in a conspiracy against Alexander III.<sup>10</sup> Lenin has told us what a powerful impression was made upon him by the attitude of his middle-class environment. His family was boycotted by all their neighbours, for nobody dared to risk unpleasantness or bring suspicion on himself. This behaviour determined Lenin's judgment of the bourgeoisie; it seemed to him a society of cowards who concealed their cruelty under fine phrases and high-flown oratory. This conviction of a real inhumanity behind humane pretences is operative in all Lenin's attacks on the bourgeoisie and their lackeys, the Mensheviks and Social Democrats. they do not really desire the freedom

and justice to which they appeal; that appeal is but a screen for the reality, a brutal selfishness.

The second event is the disillusionment experienced at his first meeting with Plechanov, which occurred when Lenin first went abroad after his return from Siberia.<sup>11</sup> Plechanov, the first important representative of Russian Marxism, was regarded by the youthful agitator and man of letters as a species of demigod. And now as soon as they met he was revealed as a conceited adventurer, unable to agree with his young visitor and his companion, the future Menshevik Potressov, about the paper they were to publish, dishonourable, a past master of crooked intrigues. Lenin's ideal world collapsed, as he confessed in letters written at the time. He saw the necessity for that objective inhuman attitude which later determined his entire position in the party struggles. And these struggles were in turn an earnest of the policy of hate and violence towards opponents which he pursued as ruler. Lenin recognised no other reality than the brutal world of hard political and economic fact through which the just society without classes must necessarily be achieved. To preach Marxism in opposition to all the idealisms which distract man from the sole realities, economics and society, became the purpose which dominated his life. And with him Marxism was no mere theory; it moulded his entire life and action. This passionate rejection of everything transcendental expressed his idealism, the fact being that for him Marxism was an absolute value, a religion.

#### STALIN AND TROTSKY

Stalin, who is regarded today as Lenin's most faithful disciple, and like Lenin is the real leader of the Bolshevik party, is as a man very unlike his master. He is a Georgian, whereas Lenin was a Great Russian, with, apparently, a

strong Mongolian strain in his blood. No doubt Stalin has received a modicum of education, since he studied for the priesthood; but the Georgian seminary where he was a student can hardly be regarded as a nursery of culture, and he left it very early, won over to the cause of revolution by Marxian tracts. Unlike Lenin, Stalin has never received a thorough intellectual training. He has been all the more active as a practical revolutionary and efficient organiser. He arranged the daring confiscations necessary for replenishing the Bolshevik party funds. Constantly banished to Siberia, he returned every time to foment new revolutionary agitation. He has never been an exile, has indeed only left Russia for brief visits abroad to attend party congresses. An essay on the question of nationalities published under his name is asserted by his opponents with a certain probability to have been written by Lenin. In the period immediately following the October revolution Stalin kept in the background. A few hesitations apart, he was on the whole a faithful follower of Lenin, without coming into any special prominence. As Commissar for the Nationalities he worked for the destruction of the Great Russian supremacy. As a member of the revolutionary Council of War he appears to have been to some extent an opponent of Trotsky. Whether the military services with which he is now credited were really so important as his panegyrists assert cannot be determined. His power increased when in 1921 he became general secretary of the party. He contrived first to get rid of Trotsky by combining with Zinoviev and Kamenev, only to overthrow later on, when his power was secure, the opposition formed by a union of Kamenev and Zinoviev with Trotsky. He continued the struggle against dangerous opponents by destroying the Right opposition of Bucharin and Rykov in 1929-30. Today his power as party leader is uncontested, and his authority openly recognised.

Unlike Lenin, he has no love for objective discussions. A clever strategist, now that his power has been secured he will admit no dangerous colleagues. Purely practical in his interests, he is responsible for no original ideas. He continues energetically Lenin's work of practical education, of economic and industrial organisation, making use of the official doctrine as a convenient framework. He is the most perfect example of the practical revolutionary of the period after the revolution, distinguished from such colleagues as Enukidse, Ordchonikidse and Bubnov only by his greater energy, ruthlessness and tactical skill. He is characteristic of the old Bolsheviks, whose intellectual limitations were lamented even by Lenin, but who under the influence of power and the self-confidence and self-satisfaction of a governing class have developed into good organisers and political strategists. In contrast to Lenin, who might have been a scholar, Stalin has no intellectual interests. Bolshevism is for him something completely self-evident, for his entire life has been formed by it. His skilful tactics and the diplomatic abilities which he displays in party discussions are combined with a rudeness which has not spared Lenin himself.

Stalin's rival in the party was Trotsky.<sup>12</sup> A typical revolutionary litterateur devoted to display, he could not, like Stalin, be content with the simple possession of power. In the eyes of the old Bolsheviks he is the typical representative of a body of exiles which shrinks from the burdensome toil of daily work and organisation. Phrase-maker and revolutionary hero—such is the figure he cuts in these circles. The purity of his motives, unlike Lenin's, is very dubious; his vanity makes it difficult to decide whether he is really working for the cause or for himself.

A man of wide interests, he loves to write on a host of different subjects. The Commissar for War has published studies in literary history. He is an inspiring orator,

invaluable at a crisis, as was shown by the part he played after the October revolution. During the construction of the Red Army Lenin recognised his ability as an organiser, his power to electrify his environment. But he lacks the unity of purpose, the self-assured consistency for which Stalin is distinguished. He is more remarkable for brilliant inspirations than for steadiness. He cannot endure contradiction, as is shown by his tendency to refuse publicly to co-operate with others—for instance to take part in a commission during the so-called trade-union strike. His probably unconscious over-estimate of his personal importance makes him undervalue the importance of the technical routine and organisation in which Stalin excels. Even his partisan, Eastman, calls attention to his failure to collect around him a body of faithful helpers.

He was therefore gradually isolated by Stalin, since, although he made several attempts to seize control of the party, he could not make up his mind to defy party discipline. His combination with other leaders whom Stalin has forced into the background, Kamenev, Zinoviev, Radek, Preobrachensky and Smilga, came too late. These eminent leaders could no longer reach the public—the party machine had been too powerful for them. After they had been disposed of by expulsion and banishment Stalin continued to isolate Trotsky. He was abandoned by Kamenev and Zinoviev first, then by all the other leaders of the opposition. Yet by his industrialisation and collectivisation Stalin actually carried out considerable portions of Trotsky's programme. An exile abroad, Trotsky has been ever since the ghost of former greatness, impotent for the present, at least so long as Stalin is able to maintain his control of the party organisation. But whether he would benefit even by Stalin's fall may be doubted. He has too many personal enemies and no body of reliable followers.

Trotsky has suffered greatly from the fact that, unlike Stalin, he was not an old Bolshevik, but only joined the party in July 1917. Previously he had occupied a position intermediate between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks. He approximated to revolutionary Marxism by his theory of the so-called permanent revolution, in which the proletariat was to educate the peasants to Socialism; he approached the Mensheviks by his rejection of the Bolshevik principles of organisation. Lenin carried on against him the most embittered polemics, which Stalin has exploited against his rival, though the latter now declares himself to be Lenin's orthodox disciple. There can be no doubt that if his demand for a democratic party government had been carried out it would have led to the fall of Bolshevism; the party would have split. Nor was his demand for public discussions, to be followed by rigorous enforcement of whatever decision was reached, a practical proposition; but we may well believe that he demanded these public discussions only because he did not possess authority in the party. For he had often shown himself a terrorist. Unlike Lenin and Stalin, Trotsky is a 'striking personality'; but it is this very quality which makes him ineffective as an example for the routine worker.

#### THE OTHER LEADERS

After Lenin, Stalin, and Trotsky, Dzerzhinsky, the first head of the Cheka and Ogpu—a position which he held for several years—deserves a special description. He was the idealistic and therefore the more ruthless revolutionary fanatic. His personal disinterestedness and honour are as incontestable as his unbounded cruelty, a cruelty purely objective and decided by motives of political expediency. He was an intellectual sprung from the Polish nobility—of the same origin as his successor Menchinsky, who gave

himself unreservedly to the Bolshevik party and the revolution. He is perhaps the most striking example of the dehumanising effect of a social creed which makes absolute claims. Though in private life anything but a man of brutal violence, in the name of revolution he put thousands to death. The statement is frequently made that he was afflicted with a strain of insanity. Whether this is true it is hard to say; if so it certainly did not impair his powers of judgment and action. It was his revolutionary faith which made him so completely inhuman and capable of wholesale murder—the only name we can give to his execution of every political and social opponent, even potential.

The same tribute of personal disinterestedness cannot be given to Zinoviev and Kamenev. They are intellectuals of Jewish origin. As is shown by their opposition to the venture of the October rising and the struggle with the non-Bolshevik Socialists, they gave their adhesion to the dictatorship only when it had succeeded. Both are marked by a lack of personal courage, as their attitude towards Trotsky has proved. Though at first they took Stalin's part against him, when they had been expelled from the government of the party they allied themselves against Stalin with the man they had so vigorously opposed. This, however, did not prevent their being the first to abandon him after his fall. From Suchanov's descriptions Kamenev seems to be a feeble man of average capacity and without strength of character, who lacks the courage to combat a determined opponent. Zinoviev's entire action is determined by the craving for personal power. It is characteristic that the slogan on which the contest was waged against them when they were at the head of the Leningrad and Moscow Soviets was: 'No satraps in the party organisation.'

The Commissar for Education, Lunatcharsky, whom we have often mentioned already, is a radical intellectual



whose connection with Bolshevism is an accident out of keeping with his character. His removal from his post by Stalin is due to the present purely economic and practical orientation of the party. There is no more time for his æsthetic experiments, and the sympathies of the international bohemians on whom his enthusiasm for every artistic novelty and his bold schemes had made a great impression are no longer indispensable. Chicherin, for years Commissar for Foreign Affairs, is, like Ossinsky (Obolensky), a man of the old nobility who espoused Marxism under the influence of an enthusiasm kindled by the revolutionary intelligentsia. Like Krassin, he is one of the old Bolsheviks who in the days following the October revolution came to the front as specialists, and whose activities have little connection with the official philosophy.

The same is true of the members of the Right opposition, especially their leaders Tomsy and Rykov; both are definitely practical men, who would willingly abandon radical schemes. This explains why the trade unionist Tomsy was accused of Social Democratic revisionism and Rykov of favouring the Kulaks. Bucharin occupies a position by himself in the Right opposition.<sup>13</sup> From a Left Communist he became the upholder of a greater leniency towards the peasants and a slower rate of industrialisation. Lenin had spoken of him as a man whom it was impossible to hate, in spite of his constant changes of opinion. He also regarded him as a man who, in spite of his knowledge of economics, did not really grasp the materialist dialectic which was the foundation of Marxism. Trotsky in his *Memoirs* describes him sarcastically as a man who must always cling to someone else's coat-tails. He is a typical Russian intellectual, who loves writing, and is addicted to logic-chopping, which, as Lenin's criticism observed, he dresses up in a complicated scientific terminology. For a time he was useful to Stalin as a publicist, but he has been

completely excluded from political authority since the programme of radical industrialisation and collectivisation was set in hand. Radek, who since his abandonment of the opposition bloc is once more employed as a journalist and undertakes foreign propaganda, is the characteristic 'international Bolshevik' as he is popularly conceived. Cynical, extremely clever, and a nihilist, he is the picture of the unchanging revolutionary agitator whose chief concern is to destroy the existing bourgeois world.

It would serve no purpose to describe individually the new men who have succeeded the Trotskys, Rykovs, Kamenevs and Zinovievs. They are marked by a complete lack of intellectual interests, and by the contrast they present to the revolutionary intellectual, as variously represented by Trotsky and Radek. Nor yet are they completely unselfish revolutionary fanatics like Dzerzhinsky. They bear stamped all over them the mark of their origin in the practical work of revolution, or in those circles of the proletariat which have been awakened by Bolshevism. They are far too uncritical to take the responsibility for any departure from Lenin's creed, which has proved so successful as the foundation of the new system. They regard Bolshevism as something self-evident, to which, moreover, they owe their careers. They are too prosaic to be influenced by literature or theories. Trotsky loathed them as bureaucrats, but they defeated him. They show no interest whatever in culture, apart from such things as technology and hygiene. They despise a liberal education because they care for nothing except political and economic power. Their fanaticism, such as it is, is simply the expression of a political and economic realism, without a trace of the idealism, the desire to help the people, which we can detect behind their realism in Lenin and certain of the old Bolshevik intellectuals who were not absorbed in the conduct of the party machine. Whether it is Vorochilov

the Great Russian and the present Commissar for War, Chubar the Ukrainian, president of the Ukrainian Council of People's Commissars, or Ordchonikidse, the Georgian head of the Economic Council—whatever their individual differences, they belong to the same type. They are distinguished from Stalin only in degree. The time has gone by when under Lenin the Bolshevik party could be led by a body of men representative of altogether different types.<sup>14</sup> Today the man of the everyday task, the practical organiser, is in the saddle; in the background are a few more or less ambitious self-seeking intellectuals, pocket editions of Zinoviev, like the present Foreign Commissar, Litvinov. For Bolshevism the period of original development is over. It is no accident that Stalin describes himself as Lenin's best and most faithful disciple. The rule of Lenin's successors is characterised by the type of leader who is now at the head of the party and occupies the important political and industrial positions.

## V

### THE BOLSHEVIK CREED

#### THE IMPORTANCE OF A THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

It would be a complete mistake to imagine that the accession of the proletarian Bolshevik and the practical worker to the government of the Bolshevik party has produced any departure from its official creed. On the contrary, their advent has involved a rigid adherence to its letter. No doubt certain articles of the Bolshevik faith are treated as promises of a future whose realisation is progressively postponed, whereas others acquire increasing prominence. But this does not affect in any way its fundamental principles. Leninism stands so far solid and unshaken. It is the standard which regulates the party, and with it the entire public life of the Soviet Union. Without its doctrines and fundamental thesis the party could never have developed as it has. Truly did Stalin call himself Lenin's most faithful disciple. Even the controversies within the party did not involve any rejection of Leninism by the Opposition, though concerned with individual doctrines of fundamental importance regarding the practical conduct to be adopted at present, the right attitude to the world revolution or to the work of Socialist construction at home. It would display a gross under-estimate of the significance and threat of Bolshevism, as an historical phenomenon and organ of world revolution, to regard its appeal to Marx, and the ideas and methods which Lenin received from Marx and developed, as mere official phraseology no longer seriously believed. Dobb, the author of 'Russian Economic Develop-

ment since the Revolution,' is right when he warns us against the notion that soon after their accession to power the Bolsheviks recognised the Utopian character of their doctrines. The belief that they no longer take their creed seriously, but merely make use of it to deceive and seduce the masses and justify a Government which pursues quite different aims is completely unfounded. It is impossible to understand Bolshevism without knowing its philosophy. No doubt its success and the practical results of that philosophy have been closely bound up with particular historical and social conditions. But their philosophy is not simply the result of these, the expression and justification of a change in the classes governing Russia. On the contrary, it has to a very large extent determined the external development.

Without it events would have taken a very different course. Those, for example, who regarded NEP as the commencement of a return to private capitalism, who hastily dismissed Bolshevism as a new form of Russian nationalism, and considered its use of force, insistence on discipline, and the formation of a well-drilled army as glaring departures from its youthful Marxism, would have seen their hopes fulfilled. Such an under-estimate of the Bolshevik creed cannot be rejected too emphatically. No doubt Lenin made many mistakes of detail. No doubt, taught by the practice of government, he found himself obliged to alter, abandon entirely or postpone many of his plans. But he never felt obliged to abandon his fundamental faith. On the contrary, it was part of that faith that it was by practice that it must be verified, transformed into a concrete living actuality, so that, far from being refuted by mistakes and failures, it grew and developed by their means.

Bolshevism is a philosophy in the strictest sense. It cannot be regarded as a mere instrument of government, a propagandist device of ambitious demagogues. In spite of all the shortcomings of its representatives, and the

atrocities committed in its name which cannot of course be justified by the unquestioning faith of its adherents, it has up to the present retained this philosophic character, even though the enthusiasm of its first years is a thing of the past and has yielded to a commonplace, uninspired, and bureaucratic routine. For the language in which all the operations of Bolshevism are carried on today is still that of pure Leninism—the language in which he formulated his philosophy—and we cannot think lightly of the power exercised by an ideology which dominates the whole of public life. It has, so to speak, assumed flesh and blood. Its conceptions are no longer felt as such, but as self-evident realities.

Such an ideology has been transformed from a philosophy consciously learned and imposed on life from without into a concrete living force, a national outlook, which unconsciously, implicitly, and spontaneously determines and moulds all men's judgments and appreciations. We must, therefore, beware of under-estimating the effectiveness of the Bolshevik creed or its claim to be a complete philosophy of life, because certain aspects of actual Bolshevism seem to contradict the demands of their theory, or the Bolsheviks give at times the impression that their assent to it is no longer wholehearted.

#### LENINISM

It is impossible to give here an adequate account of the philosophical antecedents of the Bolshevik creed, Leninism. We cannot, therefore, inquire whether its historical claims are justified and it is really the orthodox interpretation and continuation of the teaching of Karl Marx. Our sketch of Leninism must be satisfied with elucidating its leading ideas and concepts and showing their practical results; that is to say, we must explain the Bolshevik practice

hitherto described by its theoretical philosophy, and show how the former is determined by the latter. We shall thus lay bare the foundations of the Bolshevik creed as a social force which tolerates no religion or philosophy other than itself and makes a unique claim to determine and embrace man's entire being, is therefore essentially intolerant, and, whatever strategical adaptability it may display in the choice of methods, admitting no compromise of principle.

Perhaps the best way to understand the distinctive character of Leninism is to begin by contrasting it with other varieties of Marxian Socialism. It decidedly rejects all these—which it regards as mere opportunism, treachery to the proletariat, the degradation of Marx's doctrines into trivialities, servility to the bourgeoisie. Leninism presents itself with entire self-confidence as the one true interpretation of Marxism. What, then, does it regard as the essential doctrine of Marx, the deposit which it faithfully preserves and develops in contrast to the pseudo-Marxians of every description? Undoubtedly the doctrine known as dialectical materialism. Dialectical materialism is the description of their philosophy given by the Bolsheviks themselves. It must be distinguished in the first place from every form of metaphysical materialism current in the eighteenth century and among bourgeois men of science in the nineteenth. For it the world is not a static world, at rest and without a history; it is an historical, moving and changing reality. The dialectic is the theory of these changes and movements, the principle which explains them. But it is not, as with Hegel, an idealist logic, for it is based on an objective materialism. It is the explanation of historical and social changes and developments as due to causes of a material nature; namely, the conditions of production and the class system founded upon these. It cannot be opposed as a spiritual force to this social and historical reality; for it is a statement of the origin and development of that reality.

All idealism is therefore rejected as being simply the expression of a subjective attitude to the world divorced from the historical fact.

Lenin was never weary of insisting on the importance of dialectical materialism. It alone guaranteed the claim of Marxism to be objective truth, which both recognised and transformed the real world. He also emphasised the connection between Marx and Hegel. In the philosophical notes published after his death we find the dictum 'Without Hegel Marx's "Kapital" is unintelligible.' Repeatedly he points out that it is the dialectic which changes materialism from a static and metaphysical theory into knowledge of social and historical reality. But he does not regard the dialectic as spiritual or ideal. It is objective, the expression of a social and historical situation, itself determined by the conditions of production. It must not be regarded as an independent doctrine, a theory isolated from reality. There is no doubt also a dialectic which is the formal logic of the laws of thought—an epistemology. But reality is concrete, and dialectic is therefore correctly applied only when related to social and historical conditions.

Lenin, therefore, vigorously opposed all attempts to substitute for dialectical materialism—this combination of Hegelian logic with the Marxian analysis of society and its classes—a system of scientific and mechanical explanations, the so-called 'scientificism.' The dialectic is more than the results or method of scientific knowledge, more than a doctrine of material changes of equilibrium which determine the relation of man to nature and therefore to production<sup>1</sup> It is the instrument by which we acquire knowledge of the concrete tasks to be achieved and the concrete structure of all social and historical relations. It is at once abstract and concrete. It makes it possible to describe concrete reality by abstract formulas—of such description Marx gave an example, to understand its contradictions and



stages of development without over-simplification. For it is not, like formal logic, subject to the law of contradiction; on the contrary, it is able to explain the changes that actually take place, to comprehend whatever is in process of birth, comes into existence, and transforms itself as it develops. It can therefore grasp the significance of all historical conditions and processes. It is not blinded by an *a priori* belief in a continuous evolution without gaps. For it recognises the law in virtue of which quantity is transformed into quality, a law whose operation in society involves revolutionary convulsions and calls for man's energetic co-operation. It is therefore essentially a revolutionary doctrine, while at the same time accepting all the results of the historical and social process. We cannot over-estimate the importance attached by Leninism to the Hegelian dialectic, which, however, it combines with materialism, as the belief that all historical and social conditions are brought into being and overthrown by production. Without prejudice to the objective truth or falsity of this position the historian must admit that Lenin was here in agreement with Marx himself, as against the revisionism which rejects the dialectic and substitutes for it a belief not based on the external situation, in Marxian phraseology idealistic, in a justice and a humanitarianism which must admit the rights of the workers.

Dialectical materialism must on no account be regarded as a theoretical explanation of the actual social and historical situation, to be carefully distinguished from the practical activity which is the concrete realisation of its abstract conclusions. For we must remember the famous dictum: 'The important matter is not to know but to change the world.' Lenin's dialectical materialism, like the entire philosophical work of Marx himself, is intended to lead from knowledge of the world to its social transformation. It applies to itself its thesis that all knowledge depends

upon social and historical conditions—as the knowledge which is the instrument of revolution and of the class which is the organ of revolution, the proletariat. Its conclusions can never, therefore, be opposed to revolutionary practice. For if correct, that is in conformity with its principles, they are themselves revolutionary deeds which proclaim and express the transformation of the world.

Dialectical materialism thus develops its fundamental thesis, the unity of theory and practice. There is no philosophy formally true in isolation from historical and social reality. Everything serves that reality: even what claims to be pure theory. But pure practice independent of theory is equally non-existent. Every action expresses a distinctive conception of the historical and social facts. From his youth Lenin had insisted on this unity of theory and practice and, we must admit, he carried it out in his life

What, then, does this fundamental principle involve? The inseparability of the doctrine from the proletariat and the party which is its advance guard. For in the proletariat and in the formation and activity of the proletarian party the Marxist dialectical materialism finds expression, maintains itself, and takes shape as social and historical reality. It is for this reason that Bolshevism rejects uncompromisingly the opportunism of the trade unionist or parliamentary man of action, for whom Marxism is but a system of abstractions hampering practice and no longer possessing any great value for daily work or the improvement of the workers' position; it is retained simply on traditional grounds and must at any rate be restated by the elimination of Utopian elements. Leninism holds firmly to the Marxian creed in its orthodox statement as essential, if the proletariat and the workers' movement is to be guided aright, and dangerous party developments avoided. But, on the other hand, it also rejects all pure theory, not subject to the test of social and political strategy, as inevitably involving a

formalism, a purely verbal radicalism of language, which signifies in reality a surrender to opportunism. There is no dialectic materialism not bound up with the proletariat and its party, and any departures from it can only delay the historical and social mission of the proletariat.

Dialectical materialism, therefore, in the logical form given to it by Lenin is necessarily bound up most intimately with the proletarian party, revolutionary and Marxian. It is the foundation of the party, and the party is the historical and social reality in which it grows and develops. That it gives an appearance of theoretical justification to the most extreme intellectual intolerance is obvious. The official view of the party is identified with the correct theory. Hence the principle, 'Unity of theory and practice,' involves a radical intolerance, not only of all non-Marxian beliefs that claim his name, but also of all members of the party who are intellectually independent. For the least assertion of independence they may be denounced and persecuted as having infringed the principle of unity of theory and practice. And this actually happens if the slightest political deviation renders a man unpopular with the party leaders. He is pilloried for past errors previously passed over in silence: for example, Bucharin's misinterpretation of dialectic materialism, of which he was really guilty. So loyal a Marxist as Rjasanov is accused of a barren Marxian scholasticism which must render Marx unintelligible to the masses. Philosophical controversies—for example the controversy with Deborin and Luppel, who had hitherto been regarded as Leninists—are waged by threats of expulsion from the party.<sup>2</sup> The principle of strict unity of theory and practice actually leads to a predominance of the latter, which, however, attempts to justify itself theoretically by appealing to particular fundamental propositions and conceptions expressed by Marx and Lenin.

## THE EXPLANATION OF THE PRESENT: IMPERIALISM

What, then, are these propositions and conceptions which by their direction of the revolutionary movement determine contemporary practice? Here, too, we shall understand their distinctive character most easily, if we compare Bolshevism with the Socialist movements which it regards as opportunist. In the first place the Bolsheviks accept with wholehearted conviction the Marxian thesis that the development of society must inevitably produce Socialism, a society without classes, whose economic life is systematically organised in accordance with human needs while adopting all the achievements of technical progress. For Bolshevism, as for Marx himself, it is obvious that the proletariat and the Marxian movement or party which represents it is to be the instrument of this development. But, unlike the opportunists, for whom it is a merely theoretical belief, the Bolsheviks emphasise the part which active intervention must play in the advent of Socialism. Dialectical materialism proves that the historical process goes forward by sudden leaps and nothing is produced by gradual evolution. 'Some days,' affirmed Lenin, 'are equivalent to several decades.' The Bolsheviks accordingly reject the evolutionary interpretation of Marxism. That the proletariat should seize political power is, they insist, of supreme importance, and they therefore oppose to democracy the conception of the proletarian dictatorship taught by Marx, but in practice obscured and even lost sight of—particularly by the German Social Democrats. In adopting this point of view, in opposition to the belief in the unique sacrosanctity of parliamentary action and the struggle for political democracy, they are true to the traditions of Russian Marxism. Already in 1905-6 the eventuality had been discussed that a non-Socialist majority might be

returned by a democratic vote, and individual voices had been raised in favour of enforcing Socialism against the will of the majority.<sup>3</sup>

The Bolsheviks emphasise the importance of the state machine as the weapon in the hands of the proletariat for the successful prosecution of the class war. They refuse to make faith in a gradual evolution do duty for revolutionary action. They insist that the new Socialist society cannot possibly be attained by peaceful methods. Like capitalism, it must be established by force; and above all it cannot be completely achieved at a single stroke. History is made in action, not at the writing-desk. Lenin was not content, like Marx, to appeal, in support of this thesis of the proletarian dictatorship, only to the history of the Paris Commune. He saw its organs in the Soviets. He held that the rule of the proletariat represented a type of government superior to parliamentary democracy, which did but cloak the rule of the bourgeoisie beneath chatter and fine phrases, whereas the dictatorship of the proletariat directly, immediately and openly, and without the least pretence at disguise, confessed its character as a class war.<sup>4</sup>

To establish this dictatorship of the proletariat and keep the proletarian movement on the right lines a strong and well-organised party is indispensable. Lenin was never weary of insisting on this. That party is the vanguard of the proletariat; it pushes the masses forward by its action and appeals to their will—a will which it has itself developed. Nor can the party be absorbed into the masses even in the period after it has seized power—that is, under the dictatorship of the proletariat—for it is the instrument of their education. It must not disclaim the support of non-proletarian sections of the population. In Russia, for example, it could not have maintained itself in power without an alliance with the poor peasantry. Lenin therefore rejected the Mensheviks' opportunist conception

of the Socialist party, which opened its ranks to every applicant for membership and in the name of party democracy weakened its fighting discipline.

This conception of the party's functions also explains why the Bolsheviks reject the interpretation of Marxism which believes that Socialism can be attained by peaceful non-revolutionary methods as a development of parliamentary democracy. Parliamentary government is not indeed rejected in principle, but it must not be treated as an end in itself, it is and must always be simply a tribune where the way is paved for the proletarian dictatorship. Further, they reject the belief that Socialism cannot come into being as the result of an economic crisis. On the contrary, such crises are regarded as peculiarly favourable opportunities for the proletarian party to seize power and set up the dictatorship of the proletariat. The leap from that dictatorship to Socialism cannot be taken immediately. The dictatorship of the proletariat is often obliged first to re-lay the foundations of production, and, as in Russia, supply for an incomplete capitalist development, by an intensive process of industrialisation. But the distinctive feature of Bolshevik Marxism is that, unlike the opportunists, it does not reduce Socialism to a mere fiction, because it has no longer the courage to seize power. The rejection of legality—the intention of employing only legal methods, pacifism, moralism—such was the gospel preached by Lenin to the masses. The Bolsheviks are a party greedy for power, and they refuse to sacrifice their desire for power to opportunist dreamers, humane, pacific, and democratic, bearing the stamp of the petty bourgeois.

Was Lenin therefore a Blanquist—a man who believed, like Blanqui, in the *coup d'état* of a minority?<sup>5</sup> This charge, often brought against him after his return from Switzerland, is unjust. For Lenin, the seizure of power can only be justified by a correct class analysis; that is, by the Marxian

interpretation of social conditions. The rule of the party as a minority is not an end in itself, but a means to promote the political activity and the development of the masses. Stalin has described Leninism as the form assumed by revolutionary Marxism in the present, that is to say the imperialist, epoch. For Lenin attempted to justify his faith in the seizure of political power by the revolutionary Marxian party, by theories of the present social situation, and the phase which capitalism has now reached—in his terminology, imperialism.

What, then, did Lenin understand by imperialism, the epoch of contemporary capitalism?<sup>6</sup> As the conception is of such vital importance we shall quote his own words. 'Economic imperialism is the climax of the capitalist development. Production has become so wholesale that competition is inevitably replaced by monopoly, which expresses itself in trusts, syndicates, the omnipotence of gigantic banks, the exclusive purchase of sources of raw material, the concentration of banking capital. The political superstructure of the new economic system, monopoly capitalism—imperialism is monopoly capitalism—is the substitution of political reaction for democracy. Free competition goes hand in hand with democracy; monopoly with political reaction'—for example, Fascism, bourgeois or royal dictatorship. In other places Lenin dwells on the world situation, the foreign policy which imperialism presupposes. The entire earth has been divided between the wealthiest countries and its partition by the international trusts has begun. He points out that the economic system is indeed regulated differently under monopoly capitalism and under the capitalism of free competition. Nevertheless the monopolies are capitalist monopolies which must inevitably produce a rise in the cost of living, intensify the economic struggle, and give rise to wars undertaken for financial gain, for markets and raw material.

The horrors of famine and the barbarism involved by the imperialist war of 1914 prove that this age of capitalism must also witness the birth of the proletarian and socialist revolution.

If imperialism is thus conceived, what conclusion must we draw? An unqualified rejection of the hopes of a peaceful evolution entertained by the opportunist Socialist. No direct route leads from monopoly capitalism to the economic system of Socialism. It does nothing to remove the anarchy of production. Its projects and laws serve the interests of wholly selfish groups. Under these conditions political democracy, the system of universal and equal suffrage, retains very little prestige. During this period of wars a strong government is everything. The dictatorship of the proletariat takes the place of the pacific parliamentary work, which corresponded to the period of the Second International, the pre-imperialist phase of capitalism.

There is no longer time to wait, as the opportunists would have us wait, until capitalism has reached its maturity throughout the entire world, in order then to bring about the revolution by the united forces of the proletariat in every country, if capitalism does not peaceably transform itself into Socialism. Today we must take active measures; we must make full use of the revolutionary conditions in particular countries and among particular races. These are due to the fact that imperialism is distinguished by the export of capital, involving, as it does, the oppression of weak nations, and the exploitation of undeveloped territories, from the capitalism of free competition which was content with the export of commodities. It is, Lenin insists, ridiculous to expect the social revolution to begin simultaneously in every country. That is impossible because the majority of countries and the majority of the population of the world has either not yet reached the capitalist stage of development or has just entered upon it. The social



revolution must therefore be effected at a juncture which unites the civil war between proletariat and bourgeoisie in the most advanced countries with a host of democratic revolutionary movements which are at the same time movements for national emancipation among the undeveloped backward and ignorant nationalities. 'Capitalism develops at an unequal rate, and we therefore find side by side with a number of highly developed capitalist nations a large number of nations weak and economically undeveloped.' What is the conclusion to be drawn from these observations which further distinguish different economic strata within a single nation, so that the simultaneous existence of a capitalist and a feudal economic system is contemplated as perfectly possible? The conclusion that under contemporary conditions a particularly wide field is open to revolutionary activities. And a revolution can be successful even where the stage of economic development does not permit an immediate transition to Socialism. Its task then is to speed up development, to traverse quickly, as it were under pressure, the stages not yet reached, and thus to approach as speedily as possible the final goal, Socialism.

For that reason Lenin advocated the immediate seizure of power in Russia by the proletarian party. The party could not indeed establish Socialism on the spot, but it took possession of the machinery of government, to promote and hasten the development of society. And it has prevented the establishment of imperialism in Russia, which but for the proletarian dictatorship would have secured a new field for exploitation and the export of capital. As a proletarian state Russia serves as a base for the forces of world revolution, for it supports the struggle of the proletariat in the imperialist territories and nations. It is so to speak the permanent arsenal of the world revolution. And the temporary postponement of that revolution is perfectly

explicable on Lenin's principles. It does not take place overnight. The world must first become ripe for it, and the most favourable condition for its occurrence is the war which imperialism will finally make inevitable. Meanwhile the state where the proletariat is dictator is paving the way for it. It is attempting to speed up development within its own territory. It is completing the bourgeois revolution. It is beginning to construct Socialism. It is arming. It is the centre of revolutionary propaganda; a refuge for its agents and instruments. The very existence of the proletarian dictatorship in a single country constitutes an enormous success for the proletariat throughout the world, even if for the moment it cannot spread to other countries.

Moreover, Lenin's theory explains why it was in economically undeveloped Russia that the proletariat was able to seize power. The proletarian revolution could ally itself with the overthrow of a still powerful feudalism by the peasantry.<sup>7</sup> The bourgeoisie was weak and unorganised, so that the proletarian dictatorship could take possession of the reins of government by coalition, at least temporarily, with the peasants. The social and economical development of Russia made it necessary to set up a dictatorship of proletariat and peasantry, in which, however, the proletariat and its advance-guard, the Bolshevik party, took the lead. Feudalism had to be finally abolished. But after its destruction by the first agrarian revolution in the interest of the peasant proprietor and the period of NEP thus rendered necessary, the peasant proprietor has been in his turn dispossessed in favour of the collective farm by a further advance of the proletariat against every form of capitalism.

The example of Russia proves how extremely elastic the Bolshevik theory is rendered by its combination of the doctrine of imperialism with that of different and unequal stages of social and economic development. This elasticity

gives scope for action and daring, and prevents the Bolshevik faith from degenerating into a routine, a purely theoretical radicalism which pays itself with words and calls for revolutionary measures without taking account of the actual conditions of society, attempting, as for example in Soviet-Hungary, to set up model Socialist farms immediately after the expropriation of the landowners. But it opposes with equal vigour the opportunism, whatever its plea, which is content with momentary strategical successes, undervalues the conquest of political authority, and by its expectation of a peaceful and gradual evolution renders Socialism, the goal of social development, an unreality—something to be brought forward on occasion for purposes of propaganda, but in practice left entirely out of sight—and which is therefore a barren ideology which serves only to bind the masses to Socialist members of parliament and trade-union leaders.

#### THE FOUNDATION OF THE BOLSHEVIK CRITICISM OF RELIGION

The interpretation of the present situation by means of the conception of 'imperialism,' the dictatorship of the proletariat as a transitional stage on the way to Socialism, proves that dialectical materialism is primarily concerned with political and social issues. We might therefore be tempted to conclude that it is at bottom simply a political and social doctrine and practical guide and has nothing to do with theoretical philosophy and metaphysics, and least of all with religion, its philosophical terminology being but a cloak easily put off. But this point of view, occasionally put forward by a few western Communists, such as Höglund, who believed in the compatibility of Communism and religion, and was therefore expelled from the Third International, proves that the fundamental principles of dialectical materialism have been completely misunderstood.<sup>8</sup>

In its practical application, its interpretations of political and social phenomena, its emphasis upon political and economic life, dialectical materialism reveals itself as a distinctive philosophy, a substitute religion which seeks to take the place of religion as it has existed hitherto, and in particular of Christianity.

All its economic and political theories, interpretations of the social and historical process, conceptions such as imperialism and the dictatorship of the proletariat, are determined by the belief that the end of human nature and the human race consists in the right organisation of earthly society and of the economic conditions which control it. The goal of human evolution is clearly laid down: instead of the absolute Spirit attaining self-consciousness in history, as conceived by Hegel's idealist followers, it is the self-knowledge of producing and labouring mankind. As a result of his perfect organisation of industry and society man will no longer be dependent upon nature, will not be subject to the dominion of things, the commodities with which capitalism operates and their laws of supply and demand, and will understand his own nature because he has understood how to organise his economic life. Everyone will be able to develop his gifts, for there will no longer be any clash of interests between society as a whole and individual groups, since the whole of production will be regulated by a comprehensive plan determined and executed by society, which will abolish those sudden crises caused under capitalism by the anarchy of commerce and uncontrolled competition. The Socialist economic system will therefore fulfil the demands of justice, equality and liberty which under capitalism must remain empty catch-words, abstract formulas.

It is therefore the self-sufficiency of producing mankind which orthodox Marxism, dialectical materialism, recognises and proclaims as the meaning of history. This goal,

which embodies the immanent significance of evolution, renders everything transcendental superfluous, so that Marxism, and, moreover, the Marxism of Marx himself, is strictly atheistic, because the goal of history in which it believes admits of no reality beyond this world; indeed, makes it impossible. Every religion, however, is orientated to such a reality, and is therefore a denial of the Marxian goal, a self-sufficient productive society. Marxism is therefore essentially anti-religious. Other ideologies not directly economic in character, art and science, will continue to exist even in the Socialist society; indeed, only in that society will they attain their perfect and unfettered development, because they will no longer, as under the present system, be obliged to serve as disguises for unjust conditions, expressions of transitory social phenomena. Then they will express a truly human and productive development. But with the advent of the Socialist society religion must die.

Religion and the Socialist society, as the Marxians understand it, are incompatible. There can be only one absolute, and the transcendental Absolute of religion must therefore exclude the absolute constituted by the Socialist society. The reversal of Hegel's idealism by Marx is the fundamental reason why orthodox Marxism cannot come to terms with religion. This fact cannot be got rid of by a facile explanation of the materialist interpretation of history as simply a methodical principle which involves no metaphysical primacy of matter or economics.

The unqualified hostility of Marxism to religion, that is to the belief that human life is determined by and directed towards a transcendental goal, the belief formulated so clearly and decisively by the first answer in the Catechism, does not, as is often affirmed, rest upon the materialistic interpretation of history, the doctrine that history is determined by economic changes produced by alterations in the

form of production. It is implicit in the Marxian conception of reality, which in turn explains its materialist interpretation of history. For Marxism reality is the producing society sufficient for itself. The entire struggle of Marxism against religion is to be understood from this point of view. For the Marxian religion is simply a distortion of reality, a falsification of man's knowledge of reality—a fetish, to use Karl Marx's expression. It is intimately bound up with the capitalist supremacy of things, commodities and money, embodiments of the principle of private trade. As the true reality, the Socialist society emancipated from illusions, is achieved, religion must vanish like other aberrations of the human mind. When that reality is revealed, achieved by the establishment of the Socialist society, religion must disappear in company with the other phenomena of capitalism, such as the rule of commodities and private trade. It is not an ideology which is an essential part of man's being, but merely a proof that social conditions are imperfect and must be changed.

'Religion is opium for the people.' This famous dictum of Marx, which the Bolsheviks have adopted as a fundamental article of their creed and which Lenin formulated even more coarsely—'Religion,' he wrote, 'is alcohol (*szwuschka*)'—sums up the entire Marxian attitude towards religion. Religion is opium for the people—a justification of the existing social conditions, of the exploitation of the masses by capitalism. This opium prevents the masses from seeing the true social reality. The fetishes of religion hide from them the actual conditions. As the fetish comes between its worshippers and knowledge of the laws of nature, so religion of every description conceals the laws which govern society. We thus come to the second reason for Marx's radical opposition to religion. Religion corresponds to a social order, in which things, commodities, still rule man, who is therefore confronted at every turn in his social life with the

unexpected, and the enigmatic. It serves as the opium which renders those enigmas and shocks endurable by pointing to another world, and explaining them as effects of divine Providence, or as God's punishment for sin.

Leninism adds nothing to Marx's criticism of religion. It simply carries it out in practice and applies it in mass propaganda. On this point, as in its political rejection of the belief in a peaceful evolution of Socialism with the aid of parliamentary democracy, it admits no concession or compromise. Lenin insisted that the celebrated declaration of the Erfurt Social Democratic programme—'Religion is a private matter'—must not be understood to tolerate religion as a matter of the individual conscience; it must be interpreted in the light of the social and historical situation, as a demand for the final and absolute separation of public life and the state from religion, not as in any way permitting Socialists to accept transcendental religion. It was a weapon of political tactics, which was not intended to contradict the radical rejection of all religions by Marxism. On the contrary, the exclusion of religion from public life must be regarded merely as a preliminary to its total annihilation by the advent of the Socialist society. But this radical hostility to religion, which led Lenin to combat all forms of religious Socialism with particular severity, as compromises with the anti-Socialist and bourgeois ethos, did not involve the immediate suppression of religion by force. The combination—characteristic of revolutionary Marxism—of faith in the use of force, state pressure, terrorism, and a violent reorganisation of society with a regard for the actual situation, as demanding strategical adaptations, was operative in this instance also. No doubt the goal must infallibly be reached, but its attainment embraces every stage of development. The Socialist society and the atheism bound up with it cannot, as the Utopians imagine, be brought into being by a stroke of the pen. So long as the Socialist

society has not been achieved religion will continue to exist, and a campaign against religion which takes no account of the actual conditions of society with its religious prejudices would be senseless; indeed, positively mischievous, because it would endanger the government and propaganda of the Marxist proletarian party. Nor will an abstract atheism, such as that of the bourgeois freethinkers, suffice. The anti-religious enlightenment of Bolshevism preaches atheism, not like the bourgeois *Aufklärung* for its own sake, as a new metaphysics in harmony with science which must replace the outworn theology of the past, but as something intrinsically bound up with the establishment of the Socialist society.<sup>9</sup> It must therefore tirelessly expose the class character of religion, its alleged social roots, and that in such a way as to maintain a careful regard for the attitude of backward sections of the population.

What has been the actual result of these principles? They have led to the ambiguous policy practised by the Bolshevik Government towards religion, which we described in Part II. It may profess tolerance, respect for traditional beliefs, and denounce administrative persecution of religion. But all this is mere strategy, which in a state governed by an atheist party equally admits violent measures, the celebration of atheist festivals, and compulsory atheistic education in the state schools. Tolerance will be practised only so long as it suits the atheist aims of the Bolshevik Government. The exclusion of religion from public life will always be vigorously emphasised, and, moreover, as an atheistic and anti-religious measure. And the combination of atheism with economic and political work is typical of the way in which the Marxian opposition to religion is actually being carried out. Communist cells, for example, induce bodies of workmen to declare that they will work on Church holidays, and thus assist the execution of the Five-Year Plan. The institution of the Kolhoses



must, it is emphasised, be utilised to combat the still active influence of the Church. Brigades of workers, for example, are formed of militant atheists and members of the League of the Godless, whose activities are to set an example to the rest, and win converts to atheism.

This policy is an entirely logical application of the Marxian criticism of religion, for which atheism is bound up with an alteration of the entire economic and social order. It is involved in the very accomplishment of these revolutionary changes. The Socialist society is an atheistic society—anything else is inconceivable to the revolutionary Marxian. Marxian Bolshevism stands or falls by this identification of atheist and Socialist society, and we must never lose sight of the fact. A divorce of Bolshevism from atheism is as impossible as its divorce from the Marxian philosophy. The foundation of atheism on the Marxian conception of reality, and the identification of absolute reality with the Socialist society that enables mankind to achieve the freedom and justice which are the conditions of its true progress forge this indissoluble bond between atheism and Marxian Socialism and Communism. The atheist propaganda is not therefore the expression of an uncultured barbarism, as we might imagine from its coarse and uncivilised externals. Bolshevik atheism is the expression of a new religious faith, the faith in an earthly absolute which, its adherents believe, renders a God, Creator and Lord of the World and the Final Cause to which everything earthly, indeed the entire universe, is ordained, superfluous, an empty hallucination.

#### THE ABSOLUTE OF THE MARXIST-BOLSHEVIK FAITH

The new 'God' is the Socialist society, the first principle of Communism, in process of development by the social struggles and political activities of the present, and served

by the proletariat under the leadership of the Marxian parties of the Third International, especially the Bolsheviks of the Soviet Union, and their dictatorship, in their victory over imperialism. Faith in this new 'God' is the power which determines the entire edifice of Bolshevism, and is at the back of its social imperfections and shortcomings, not to be lightly despatched by pointing to the Asiatic character of Bolshevism. It is this faith which impels the Bolsheviks to push economic and social experiments, and keeps them fettered to the Marxian philosophy. It cannot be explained away as the result of social factors and conditions, however important the part played by the latter. This faith, which the Christian, of course, must regard as a false faith, makes Bolshevism the foe of religion and especially of the Catholic Church. It leads the Bolsheviks to combat all religions; and denounce them as allies of reaction, exploitation and capitalism. It enables them to pass over failures, and admits no compromise of principles, but only breathing spaces in the battle. It makes Bolshevism an anti-church, which seeks to erect a new tower of Babel on earth, namely the Socialist society, which by its internal harmony and perfection of structure will render a divine Providence superfluous and will have no need of a redeemer, because it regards the very possibility that man individually or socially requires any redemption as utterly absurd.

It is this faith which renders intelligible the mechanical conception of society distinctive of Bolshevism. In harmony with the principles of dialectical materialism, the Bolshevik party is regarded as the power whose function it is to promote by every possible means the development fore-ordained by the nature of society and its laws. That is why Bolshevism pays no regard to tradition or humanitarian considerations. It recognises only considerations of political expediency—nothing beyond. Political

expediency means the maintenance of its authority, an authority for which all methods are lawful which hasten the advent of the Socialist society. In all its activities Bolshevism is the midwife of an order that must inevitably come to birth. Its mechanical conception of society, the corresponding disregard for the individual and his rights, its belief in the sovereign efficacy of external measures and repression, its attempt to suppress, even legally, the fundamental unit of society as it has existed hitherto, namely, the family, thus accepting and completing a process which had already begun under capitalism: all these features are determined by this faith in a Socialist society which is its own end and recognises no higher ends to which it is subordinate. It is its own end—even the individual man exists for its service. In the Socialist society and its activities man finds the fulfilment of his destiny. It abolishes the conflict between the individual and the community, because for the first time it allows the individual to develop fully. This Socialist society may therefore be regarded as a self-deification of humanity. Offspring of all the stages of the world's history and the sufferings they involved, it gathers them all up into itself with their achievements and raises them to the level of perfection. It thus bears the same relation to universal history as Hegel's absolute Spirit, which attains self-consciousness in history. But it is not characterised, like the latter, by knowledge, but by production—the activity of economic organisation.

The opportunist sections of Socialism, the parties which believe in a gradual evolution, and therefore in practice accept the existing social order as the foundation of their activities, lose sight more or less of this Utopia of the Socialist society, not to speak of the Communism to which that society is to give birth. For the Bolsheviks, on the other hand, it is a living faith which justifies their forcible methods. It is the power which lends significance to the present

stage of privation, in which the people are compelled by force to put up with economic and social shortcomings. It gives all Bolshevik enterprises a characteristic orientation to the future, making them appear temporary experiments, all of which will achieve their purpose to the full in the coming Socialist society. 'We are moving towards Socialism, we have begun to construct the Socialist system,' is the refrain constantly heard in Bolshevik Russia. But this justification of the existing situation, of the most daring experiments, of the utmost ruthlessness and cruelty, by faith in the Utopia of the Socialist society gives Bolshevism a peculiar rigidity.

Like the opportunist parliamentary and democratic Socialism which it condemns, it ends by becoming the justification of a particular political situation. The frontiers of humanity cannot be exceeded with impunity on the plea of setting up a condition of universal justice and freedom from compulsion. In the Socialist society the state as an instrument of force perishes, for society is to control itself by the operation of its all-comprehensive order without any application of force or similar pressure. So at least the theory goes. But in reality the stage of force and inhumanity, theoretically transitional, has been transformed into a permanent arrangement. Force has been applied on an increasing scale and the machinery of compulsion built up. A terrorism at first practised to overcome opposition has been transformed into a system of political and economic terrorism, applied in the ordinary administration of the state. To be sure, terrorism is no longer used only against class opponents. It is also employed against its own agents, members of the party, it strikes dishonest or incompetent elements of the proletariat at least as often as the bourgeois.

But the terrorism has given rise to a distinctive type of man; has created in the governing sections of society a

peculiar mentality fatal to the belief, originally sincere, in Utopia. The Bolshevik leaders, it is true, still believe in the Socialist society; but their practical policy has produced an even wider gulf between their faith and reality. The application of force does not diminish, but becomes more rigorous, because it is systematically exercised. It begets a class of adventurers who attach themselves to the dominant system by an outward acceptance of its phraseology without any inward conviction. We may grant that the Socialist experiments continue, and therefore that genuine faith in Socialism still exists, and is in the last resort the mainspring of Bolshevik rule; but it has hardened into a rigid formalism, has become a justification of forcible measures and of the authority of the party, something about which its adherents reflect less and less. The theory has led to a practice which contradicts its aims.

Its realistic elements could be carried out, political power be seized and held by terrorism and novel forms of propaganda, and by evoking the activity of the masses. Gigantic social experiments could therefore be undertaken which shake the world as it is today, in which the existing social order is widely questioned. But the Socialist society as a society without compulsion has remained a Utopia; moreover it is being gradually transformed from a Utopia which destroys the existing social order and thus points to the future, into an empty ideology, a justification of the *status quo*. This transformation, which is taking place in the Soviet Union, is not yet complete. Bolshevism is still effective as the creator of a new social order, the instrument of industrialisation and enlightenment of the masses. It is still intended that Russia shall make up for the fifty years by which she was economically and industrially behind more progressive countries. But it is already evident that there is no necessary connection between the

realistic and strategical aspects of the Bolshevik creed, based on a criticism of imperialism and an acceptance of modern mass production, and its ultimate goal. That goal is an asset for propaganda, a Utopia, potent to destroy the existing order but unable to refashion it to its own fulfilment. Successes in the sphere of real politics bring the goal of a Socialist society no nearer, and the day must therefore come when the forcible government that is at present justified as a transition to Utopia becomes a naked supremacy of force, in which its present theoretical foundation is no longer maintained, even as the formality it has become in the hands of Stalin. The gulf between theory and practice, the denial therefore of the fundamental principle of their unity, will be revealed by the social reality. Its existence at present is cloaked by the tasks of social transformation, such as the industrialising of Russia. But one day it will be visible to everybody. It will then be evident that the Utopia which has served as a justification for a government based on force was misconceived, an artificial construction which has produced results completely different from those which, in virtue of its claim to represent the necessary significance of the historical process, it professed to yield. Bolshevism will then no longer be able to justify itself by its promise of the future, and that which today constitutes its strength, its pretension to understand and assist the evolution of human history, will be turned against it. Its actual achievement, its despotism, will be confronted with its own claims, and it will fall a victim to the very power it has invoked against all its enemies. In the light of history it will stand revealed as an experiment based on particular political and social conditions whose removal disproved its claim to redeem humanity. As our entire account hitherto has shown, Bolshevism is the power which is industrialising Russia and arousing the Russian masses

from their slumber. But there is one question it cannot answer: 'Economic transformation: what next?'<sup>10</sup> Here it only gives stones for bread, offers an unreal solution, and proves itself an opium, an opium which conceals reality from man and substitutes a Utopia.

## VI

### CRITICISM OF BOLSHEVISM

#### THE BOLSHEVIK MAN

THE critic of Bolshevism must not be satisfied with rejecting it. He must also explain it historically, so as to discover the reasons why it has achieved so much under contemporary conditions. What has exalted it to become a power that governs the Soviet Union, a sixth of the earth's surface, that determines the political fate of some 160,000,000 people and, moreover, exercises a powerful influence upon great masses in Western Europe—indeed, all over the world? This question can be answered only when the Bolshevik doctrines are regarded in their historical setting; when we understand what are the elements in human nature to which Bolshevism appeals, and the particular social problems for which it claims to possess a theoretical and practical solution. A mere catalogue of its failures and arbitrary acts will prove in the long run no very efficacious weapon against it, since, as we have already proved at length, it recognises its present achievement as thoroughly insufficient and appeals from actual shortcomings to the achievements and developments of the future, which it exists to serve. Only a radical criticism, displaying Bolshevism as the product of historical and philosophical developments, will show why the failures chargeable against its government of Russia are not merely accidents of its immaturity, but arise out of its essential nature. They are no accidents, because they follow from the Bolshevik view of human nature.



This conception of human nature lies at the bottom of the entire Bolshevik doctrine. It is the metaphysical and religious dogma, unconscious of itself as such, which in turn determines its political and social outlook. In the Bolshevik faith in the Socialist and self-sufficient society as the goal of human history this conception of human nature finds expression. Social and economic activity determines man's entire being. It can satisfy him completely, because it represents the entire significance of his life. The right organisation of social and economic life solves all the problems of humanity, provides for every human need, and fulfils the moral demands of freedom, equality and justice; it enables the individual to develop his powers unfettered; the tragedy and dissatisfaction of mankind vanish before its advent; it is the Utopia which as faith in complete rationalisation of life by social activity and organisation shapes and upholds the entire philosophy of Bolshevism.

For man, as Bolshevism conceives him, the ideal and instrument of this future development, there is nothing beyond. He knows no sentiments higher than those of social membership. Work for society is his *summum bonum*; technology, scientific progress, as foundations for further economic advance, are the life work which befits his nature. The Bolshevik man is the man of this world. He is not, however, an individualist for whom his personal enjoyment is enough, content simply to watch the course of history, whether that contemplation be a source of pleasure or despair. The Bolshevik worldling is a social being. He is a social animal for whom a social machine which functions in the interest of all its members represents the entire meaning of existence, and who therefore fights by every weapon at his disposal for its establishment in the contemporary world.

He therefore regards as a moral good this struggle for a social organisation that is at once demanded and produced

by the natural evolution of history. The morality of the Bolshevik man is a morality of combat. Everything that assists the revolutionary class war waged by the proletariat is good; so Jaroslavsky has formulated the fundamental principle of Bolshevik morals.<sup>1</sup> The forms which life will assume in the future Socialist society are foreshadowed by the class war and its organ, the party. It enforces solidarity, the free acceptance of a strict discipline, industry, the renunciation of personal desires, and the self-effacement of the individual before the demands of the party. The Bolsheviks therefore can satisfy the characteristic human striving for a purposeful and significant life, man's natural craving to transcend the humdrum routine of daily life, to give his activities a purpose more than personal. But he is not a complete man; he is a man whose nature has been, as it were, mutilated, deprived of supremely important parts. And all human endeavour is measured by the standard of this cripple, so that economic and social activity is the measure of every virtue and the entire intellectual life

Moreover, we must not forget that this activity is squeezed into the mould prescribed by the Marxian philosophy. The proletariat is the organ of the good, the Socialist society, industry the supreme economic power, the large-scale business undertaking the fundamental social institution. Such an outlook empties life of its content. Everything, no doubt, is clear and comprehensible, but life has lost its fulness. A few extremely simple forms are to express its meaning. They are indeed easy to handle, but exclude essential provinces of human life. No doubt this more complete humanity will find an utterance even in the Bolshevik man, but only when disguised under the formulas that mould him. Justice, freedom, kindness, courage, passion, exist only to serve the articles of the Marxian Leninist creed. They possess value only so far as they

promote the class war or assist the industrial edifice which the proletarian party is constructing. It is significant in this connection that the Bolsheviks speak of a 'party morality,' meaning not the moral code governing the relations between members of the party, but a code which is to replace that hitherto accepted.

The power of seduction which this human ideal exercises in the world at present is due to historical and social factors of a peculiar kind. The Bolshevik man is the man who accepts the development of modern society, yet will so transform it that it shall operate in the interest of all its members. He seems therefore to give that development an ethical justification. He may be regarded as the product of the modern bourgeois society for the very reason that he is struggling against its existing arrangement. For he wishes to capture the economic and industrial forces which mould it and make them the foundation of the future society, so as to increase production to the maximum and at the same time make it serve the needs of all alike. The Bolshevik accepts labour and economic and social achievement as the dominant forces of life. Here he is in entire agreement with the bourgeois society of capitalism. But he rejects the division, still maintained in the bourgeois society, of individual and social life into two spheres, a private sphere in which values other than economic are recognised, and a public sphere determined by economic laws. For him everything must be public. Society and human life coincide. Hence the distinction between the private and the public seems to him the expression of a bad social organisation. It shows that the social order is not yet such that man's social activities profit everyone, that is, society as a whole. There exists therefore a private domain which transcends society and retains for itself the fruits of social labour. With this the Bolshevik will have nothing to do. He does not see what justification there

can be for maintaining a distinction of this kind when once social and economic achievement has been recognised as all-important in public life. He draws from this recognition its logical conclusion that what is private is immoral, for it consists in the exploitation of social labour and economic production for personal enjoyment. To this ethical individualism he opposes his belief that the meaning of humanity is to be found in a society which is self-sufficient and embraces the whole of life.

The atheism of the Bolshevik, which expresses his faith in the self-sufficiency of the productive society, presupposes therefore a bourgeois society for which ideals, the intellectual life and religion, are purely the concern of the individual and no longer determine public life—forces whose operation is confined to the private sphere. Their demands must always yield to those of social life, in which economic law is regarded as the power controlling and determining everything. The intellectual life and religion therefore seem to exist only to support and justify this economic power. They subserve the actual practice of society, which they are expected to favour; at any rate, they must not interfere with it. Religion, or what passes for it, is transformed into a justification of the social advance of the middle class, founded as it is on industrialism. As Groethuysen has proved, in his account of the relations between the French bourgeoisie and the Catholic Church before the revolution, it comes into conflict with the traditional religion when the latter appears to hinder this social advance, and refuses to see in it the ultimate significance of man's public life.

Marxism, and therefore Bolshevism, does but voice the secret and unavowed philosophy of the bourgeois society when it regards society and economics as the absolute. It is also faithful to its morality when it seeks to order this absolute, the economic society, in such a way that justice,

equality and freedom, the original war-cries of the bourgeois advance, may be the lot of all. The rise of the bourgeoisie and the evolution of the bourgeois society have made economics the centre of public life. The proletariat must continue this process by abolishing the selfish securities of the bourgeoisie and its maintenance of a private sphere, idealist and religious, to justify its economic injustice and inequality.

How does this artificial construction appear in the light of reality? How is the Bolshevik man related to the real man? It must be admitted in the first place that, regarded as a norm of criticism, this ideal of humanity occupies an exceedingly strong position. For the Bolshevik man seems actually to correspond to the prevalent philosophy of life, which he does but openly express and preach to the masses. He seems to be the man of reality who truly directs the interest of the people to the essential tasks; he insists upon their political and social mission. Bolshevism, therefore, in a world which stresses economic and social success, possesses a potent appeal for those who have not enjoyed that success. It appears to them to be the only power that gives a meaning to the life of the present day—the philosophy that starts from the economic realities of the present and shows that they possess a significance for the history of the world, and do not merely serve the interests of a small group of individuals.

If Bolshevism is such a powerful force in the world today that is the explanation. It is a Utopia, which seems to the masses to correspond with the actual development of society, and spurs them to action. It does not reject the world of average humanity where labour and economic forces are all-powerful; it therefore demands no fundamental change of outlook. But within that world it provides the possibility of fruitful activity; it appeals to a sense of vocation, and seems to provide a foundation for a resolute

opposition to the class foe, which does not lose itself in fantastic dreaming. Bolshevism becomes the faith of the man who, victim of the modern bourgeois society, has either lost all vital relation to tradition or whose traditional outlook, a natural unreflecting philosophy or religious sentiment taken for granted, has broken down beneath the intolerable oppressions of daily life. To such a man every reference to a world beyond this seems false and unreal, giving him the impression that religion is simply a justification for social conditions which he finds impossible and unendurable.

And here we must bear in mind that the barbaric and primitive character of Bolshevism, the simplicity of its formulas, lends it a peculiar effectiveness. It exercises the most powerful influence on men—as we find them pre-eminently in the Soviet Union—who have never been in any living contact with civilisation. For to them it comes as the bearer of enlightenment.<sup>2</sup> And the exclusive usurpation of publicity by the Bolsheviks is in this connection a factor of decisive importance. Publicity is completely annexed by the Bolshevik formulas, and all public activity is Bolshevik. But the primitive nature of Bolshevism is also effective with sections of the population for whom the historic tradition has no longer any vital significance, and to whom all culture and the religion which accompanies it, or at any rate is felt as belonging to it, appears meaningless, something with which they have no concern. Only the achievements of civilisation and technology are regarded as significant, an attitude which constitutes a point of insertion for Bolshevism which, moreover, can exert the most potent appeal where there is a widespread disappointment with the work of parliamentary Socialism.

These are the two great types into which the masses most accessible to Bolshevik propaganda are divided: the Russian and Asiatic not yet civilised, and those who have

been uprooted by the modern capitalist world. To such a mentality the Bolshevik man seems rational and attractive, the man in touch with reality—not, as he really is, a maimed man, a stranger to the most important spheres of life. There are also those who simply welcome Bolshevism as a revolutionary power, which gives them an opportunity to rise that would not otherwise have been theirs; those who regard it as a justification for moral licence; and those who value it as the modern form of liberalism, merely because it is opposed to reaction. But we should grossly under-estimate Bolshevism were we to judge of it by these more or less parasitical camp followers. Its greatest danger consists in the fact that to the masses under the bourgeois society of capitalism it presents itself as the philosophy which will make their economic activity the foundation of a new society and satisfy their desire to rise

#### FROM UTOPIA TO TYRANNY

Bolshevism is a power which feels itself the heir and conqueror of the bourgeois society. It points to the shortcomings of that society, to the contrast which inevitably arises within it between the masses condemned to a life of privation, or at best without the chance of rising, and the economically successful, to its economic crises and to its internal conflicts, which constitute a permanent threat of war. It points to its practical materialism, which acknowledges ideals or religions only so far as they prove socially useful and promote economic progress. It points to its own courage in sweeping from its path a capitalism already outworn, with its monopolies and bureaucracy of financiers. The very fact that in Russia, in the Soviet Union, Bolshevism has not yet completed its task, that it must undertake experiments in Socialist reconstruction, is adduced as a mark of superiority.

It would certainly be a complete mistake to regard the success of the Five-Year Plan as a triumphant vindication of the new methods by which economics and industry are organised in accordance with a central plan. But a fundamental criticism is not concerned with isolated undertakings of Bolshevism. It has not to decide whether its promises have been fulfilled in practice, or whether its alleged Socialist construction has simply created a state capitalism controlled and operated by the compulsion exercised by a small group. Its concern is rather to comprehend the fundamental character of Bolshevism as a new religion, which accepts the logical consequences of the modern devotion to politics and economics, as the powers which give life its meaning, and combines with this attitude moral demands and promises for the future. This gives Bolshevism a vigour and simplicity which raise it above all modern liberal and post-liberal forms of relativism. For every question it has a plain answer; and the answer is effective, just because it is simple and intelligible to the masses, corresponds to the unavowed philosophy of the modern world, and can adapt itself to different situations and stages of development.

Bolshevism cannot therefore be refuted simply by political and economic arguments. It is a doctrine of salvation, which proves itself modern and the offspring of the bourgeois society by its belief that the world can be saved and mankind redeemed by political measures and economic changes. The economic and political situation of the contemporary world is such that a doctrine of political and economic salvation of this kind cannot be met by appealing to the fact that the present order has maintained itself successfully. For this Utopian doctrine of salvation could never have arisen, still less have achieved so much, had the old order made good. Its truth and achievement are in themselves a proof that something was



wrong. Bolshevism is at once the product of the bourgeois society and the judgment upon it. It reveals the goal to which the secret philosophy of that society leads, if accepted with unflinching logic—that is, if the external sanctions which it attempts to derive from forces in themselves alien (for example, religion) by setting apart a domain of private life are withdrawn.

The critic of Bolshevism must not therefore start from its struggle against the existing bourgeois society. From this point of view he can only reach barren generalisations of a historical and psychological nature. He may, for instance, conclude that Bolshevism corresponds to the special situation of a country so economically backward as Russia. Only the compulsion exercised by Bolshevism could force the lazy Russian masses to work, a proof that Bolshevism is an Asiatic phenomenon with no relevance to the advanced countries of the West. It is thus transformed from a religious and philosophical into a political and economic peril. It becomes identical with the so-called Russian peril, which consists in the rapid entrance of Russia into the economic life of the modern world. The Bolshevik Government, it is argued, puts forward its doctrines merely to justify its authority. This is to treat Bolshevism, as a doctrine of salvation, as lightheartedly as the various idealisms with which we cloak our business enterprises and our competitive economic struggles. From this standpoint Bolshevism is at most to be combated as an enemy of culture, though it is far from clear in what this culture we are defending consists. For its representatives have only discovered very late in the day its connection with Christianity. In the nineteenth century they were wholeheartedly liberal, positivist and anti-religious. No doubt all these interpretations of Bolshevism from the standpoint of politics or culture contain a valuable element of truth, but they entirely miss its character as a doctrine

of salvation. Only when this is recognised is any effective opposition to Bolshevism possible. This the Bolsheviks themselves fully recognise. That is why they regard religion as their most dangerous foe. For the Absolute of religion, God, who as Lord and Creator of the Universe is the last end both of the individual man and of the human race, excludes faith in the Utopia of a self-sufficient Socialist society.

Nor should we set out from general considerations to expose the insufficiency and unreality of the Bolshevik man, the holder of the Bolshevik creed and the ideal of Bolshevik practice. It is not enough to point to his emptiness, his intellectual and spiritual poverty. For the modern world is encamped in a valley so low-lying that the summits of the spiritual life are no longer visible. Appeals to ideas and ideals have been too common, and have finally become incredible. The strength of Bolshevism consists in the fact that it sets out from social and political reality, and it must be attacked at its strongest point. We must not therefore be content with pointing out particular defects, but must show that it does not fulfil the promises by which it justifies its existence, that its ideal man is not a real human being, that its government must produce results totally different from those which it seeks to achieve, and that far from approximating to its Utopia, it is moving away from it. And the product of the development of Bolshevism such as we have described it must furnish the starting point of this demonstration.

Bolshevism employs terrorism only as an instrument to set up a social order which will dispense with the use of force. How has this claim worked out in practice? The terrorism has spread ever more widely. Voluntary co-operation is increasingly yielding to terrorisation. It is applied not only to class opponents, but to members of the party who dissent from the leaders' views—that is, who will

not accept the so-called general line of policy. This has produced a moral corruption of the worst description. Deceit is everywhere prevalent, and a regular art of adaptation to the accepted orthodoxy has grown up. The Bolsheviks denounce bourgeois freedom as a sham. According to them it is a mere illusion of liberty which cloaks the dominion of a class. But the dictatorship of the proletariat has become a dictatorship over the proletariat, even if the dictators still hold fast to their original objectives. And no limit can be set to terrorism, when it has once been admitted as a political weapon. Trotsky has no right whatever to complain, as he does, that Stalin has used it against himself. Stalin regarded Trotsky as a danger to Bolshevism, justifying the use of any weapon. For who is to decide what is a danger to Bolshevism, when once the Bolshevik doctrine has been accepted that the party is the instrument by which the Socialist society must be achieved? Is it the party leaders? If so, no moral boundary can be set to the Bolshevik terror. The system of terrorism has produced a distinctive type of ruler, for whom authority, however closely he may still be attached to his creed, is more important than anything else. Authority has thus come to rest on a different basis. The maintenance of personal power has undoubtedly become more important than in the past, but there is no guarantee that it will be identical with the interest of the community. On the contrary, it rests upon individual ruthlessness and insensitiveness.

That extinction of bureaucracy which Lenin declared to be one of the chief aims of Bolshevism is therefore entirely out of the question. The old bureaucracy has been replaced by a new—less strongly entrenched, it is true, but no less technically accomplished, and even more ruthless. Is this a mere accident, the expression of a passing immaturity? It is not accidental, but a proof of the purely

political character of the Bolshevik conception of human nature and the corresponding Socialist society. The elevation of politics and economics to sovereignty over human life has produced a dehumanisation of man. He must seek to attain his goal by every possible means, and because that goal is essentially unattainable, since society cannot function harmoniously and at the same time spontaneously, but must have rulers and leaders to guide and shape it, faith in this Utopia of a self-sufficient society must lead to an increasingly severe oppression by those who seriously hold it and do not simply make use of it to secure and justify their private advancement. And the oppression in turn produces moral corruption and hypocrisy, which render the purification of society impossible. Hence oppression and hypocrisy foster one another, until the moment arrives when terrorism ceases to be used with the sincere aim of realising the theoretical Utopia and is employed simply as a means of government. This is the point at which the unreality of all doctrines of salvation which promise an earthly redemption becomes evident. The day will come when Bolshevism will be seen for what it is, the expression of a particular situation, and a justification of actual conditions unjust and intolerable, and a new revolution will attack a system which owed its power to revolution. In the name of a new Utopia an attack will be launched against the old which has become a mere justification of injustice, an unendurable fact. From Utopia to tyranny is always but a step, and the Utopians often fail to perceive that the step has been taken.

The tyranny to which the Bolshevik doctrine of salvation leads is not simply a political and economic oppression. It is far more comprehensive and therefore more intolerable than a tyranny of the normal sort, because it is based on a fundamental philosophy, a particular conception of

human nature and the objects of society. It desires to impose on men particular doctrines, and is not content with their obedience to governmental and economic regulations. The entire man must be embraced and occupied by Bolshevism. In future there must be no contrast between the individual and society, for the life of the individual must belong completely to society, which is regarded as the goal of history. That alone which promotes this development has any longer the right to exist. This produces an oppression of unparalleled magnitude. All intellectual life that does not serve Bolshevik aims must be annihilated ; intellectual freedom and independence must yield to the dogmas of the Bolshevik creed ; religion must disappear, and scientific research be exclusively directed to results which are in harmony with the doctrines of dialectical materialism and, above all, serve the Bolshevik rule.

The usurpation of the whole life by Bolshevism becomes the more intolerable the more plainly it is perceived that the Bolshevik formulas do not correspond with reality and Bolshevism is transformed from a Utopia into a political tyranny. Bolshevik rule proves a most effective engine for deintellectualising the masses. A barbarian in control of modern technical processes—such is the Bolshevik at his best. He has no interest in anything except technology, economic control, success in the social struggle. Everything besides has no existence for him, is excluded from his life. No doubt the Bolshevik education represents a progress for a population hitherto ignorant of modern civilisation and now for the first time brought into contact with it, whose land has to be industrialised and whose standard of life has been extraordinarily low. But the day will come when this will no longer be the case. Man cannot permanently live on future hopes and economic promises. Even if the economic projects succeed, the improvement

in the standard of living and the regulation of individual chances of a career which success would involve must bring Bolshevism face to face with an intellectual crisis.

#### THE DISEASES OF THE BOLSHEVIK SOCIETY

At present Bolshevism is able to hide the emptiness of its conception of human nature and the poverty of the goals to which it directs mankind by investing them with a glamour of conflict that conceals the unsatisfactory character of the present situation and the fact that the Bolshevik philosophy, from a guide to a future Utopia, has become the justification of a systematic terrorism and the destruction of all individual rights as against the party state. But can this glamour possibly last? When the Five-Year Plan has been accomplished another economic plan, say, a Ten-Year Plan, may take its place. But can that permanently satisfy man's heart and mind? Can it make him forget that the creed on which the governors base their rule fails to take concrete shape. The very fact that life refuses to develop along the lines laid down by Marxism renders inevitable a continually heavier intellectual repression. In future it must be made impossible to conceive any other way of living than that established by Bolshevism.

This undertaking completes the separation of Russia from the outside world. The non-Bolshevik world is known only in the distorted picture presented by Bolshevik formulas and the slogans of Bolshevik propaganda: it contains nothing but oppression of the working class, systematic persecution of Communists, and preparations to attack the proletarian state. The extinction of every spiritual and religious craving must be hastened, since the censorship does not prove sufficiently efficacious, by forcible pressure. But in the long run force must fail in

this sphere as completely as it has always failed hitherto as a weapon for the establishment of a free society not resting on compulsion. As a result of employing force, force becomes treated as an end in itself. This is becoming increasingly evident in Russia today. It does not act as the midwife of a new life; there is no sign that a proletarian culture as the Bolsheviks understand it is growing up. Their culture is a mere borrowing of the civilisation of western Europe, which takes on a new complexion when adopted by a fresh and vigorous population. Technology may appear absolute and divine, but disillusionment will not be slow in coming. The Bolshevik who on his return from the civil war could not settle down to the routine of daily work is being replaced by the Bolshevik who despairs because he finds that technical achievement and industrial work fail to satisfy him and fill his life.

This attitude of disillusionment need not, of course, produce a complete collapse. In the average man it simply produces an opportunism which no longer takes the official doctrines seriously, but simply makes use of them as an opportunity for personal advancement. Thus a new type has come into being—the Bolshevik philistine, who is becoming more and more powerful in Soviet Russia. He uses the existing organisation of society to procure advantages for himself; for example, by publicly breaking with his non-proletarian parents and joining the Kom-somol in order to be able to study. He is the most reliable champion of the general line of policy laid down by the party because it means his personal career, and he attacks his personal enemies by charging them with attempts to wreck the Five-Year Plan or with disbelief in the Socialist cause in spite of external membership of the party.<sup>3</sup> The society created by the Bolsheviks has in no way proved an instrument for the elevation of man. On the contrary, because technology and economic success are regarded as

all-important, the level of life as a whole has sunk; virtue can, so to speak, utter itself only under a mask, and a primitive barbarism is fostered, which is not in the least altered by the slogan: 'We must catch up with the advanced countries.'

The new forms of society which Bolshevism has created are therefore evolving in a direction which does not draw a step nearer to its Utopian goal. The matrimonial code has brutalised sexual relationships, and in particular has injured the woman in a way which its authors, blinded by their theories, never contemplated. Economic securities are worthless when the maintenance legally due to a wife cannot in practice be enforced, and when the constant change of relationships, as is proved by the admission of the Bolshevik juvenile and adult courts, violates human rights. Such cases as the murder of a faithless wife by a Bolshevik worker cannot be disposed of by calling it a survival of bourgeois prejudices. The principle of Bolshevik matrimonial law, that the fidelity of husband or wife is of no importance because the cohabitation of the sexes does not give rise to a right of ownership, is simply proved to be false to life and human nature. In this connection it is beside the point to speak of a period of transition; for it is impossible to alter human nature by economic changes. Nor yet are national oppositions overcome by community of class, as the official doctrine maintains. As the complaints in the Bolshevik Press prove, peoples who have attained to national self-consciousness will not willingly allow themselves to be moulded into a unity by the Bolshevik economic policy. Compulsion must be applied. And in fact, the economic policy of Bolshevism is considerably modified by the necessity of taking account of these national contrasts by respecting the rights of the federal republics. That is to say, Bolshevism has not strictly adhered to its ideal of an economic system wholly determined by rational



considerations of efficiency. Its economic achievements are producing—and this is the most fatal criticism of the Bolshevik Utopia—not the new Socialist society, but a deliberately selfish society, open only to the argument of force.

At present all this is still concealed by the smoke of battle. It is still possible to argue: 'We are as yet very far from our goal, we have still to combat religious and national prejudices centuries old; the heritage of the bourgeois society is still operative, and the shortcomings of the old system still visible.' But do these shortcomings really grow less? No, they merely assume new guises. Is a new human relationship to be seen in the party? There are, it is true, members united by the common sufferings of the past, Tsarist persecution endured in common, and who keep their faith in the Utopia for which they devoted their lives. But this has not prevented struggles which take the hideous form of struggles for personal power. Here also we find that hypocrisy and unscrupulous striving for individual success which the Bolsheviks denounce as the motive forces of the bourgeois society. Even the Bolshevik party must face the question: 'A rearrangement of society, a new economic system; what next?' Changes of social and political organisation cannot change the human heart; they can only change the forms in which its virtues and vices find expression.

It might be urged that the defects of Bolshevism occur in every form of society; Bolshevism therefore cannot fairly be made responsible for them. To this plea we must reply that it is precisely the aim of Bolshevism to achieve the redemption of mankind by political and social measures. This distinguishes it from other social movements, which pursue only some immediate political and economic objective and therefore simply represent a shifting of social leadership, a dethronement of the ruling groups.

Bolshevism cannot be divorced from its Utopia or that Utopia regarded as a mere instrument of propaganda. Its entire force and effectiveness rest on its claim to introduce and create the true order of society. Only this claim renders its policy intelligible; and that policy on many occasions would have followed other paths, if the Bolshevik leaders had not held fast to their Utopia.

A sober contemplation of its achievement no doubt disposes of this claim, and shows that Bolshevism must inevitably become but one system amongst others. Because the fundamental doctrines of Bolshevism are in conflict with human nature, it must inevitably set up a political and economic system diametrically opposed to its own theories. To be sure, it can still conceal the gulf between its Utopia and reality on the plea of a transitional period, but the longer its government continues, the more evident must it become that this alleged period of transition is planting its compulsion more and more firmly. The Bolshevik theories and promises of salvation are actually what it charges religion with being—opium. They make possible efforts which a clear view of reality would render impossible. The fundamental error of Bolshevism is to treat man as purely a social and economic being, who is to find the purpose of his life in a well-organised society which can be transformed by social reforms.

The real man is far harder to understand than the Bolshevik man. He possesses traditions and passions which no social upheaval can abolish, and which recur in every social order. He is a being to whom some measure of compulsion must always be applied, if he is to behave as a member of human society. The real man can never produce a self-sufficient society. If he attempts to create it, he becomes a tyrant. A particular section has seized power over the rest to whom its social ideals make no appeal, and thus the old relationships between the leaders

and those they lead reappears. By its development into a tyranny, and the transformation of its Utopia, its doctrine of salvation, into an ideology justifying the domination of its representatives, Bolshevism has become an unintentional and therefore most impressive witness to the existence of an inviolable social order, founded on the fact that no perfect and self-sufficient human society is possible. Its inhumanities are the result of its failure to understand human nature and therefore to recognise the inherent boundaries of society. It believes that a perfect society is possible and therefore has been transformed into the organ of a most intolerable tyranny.

The attraction of the Bolshevik Utopia for the contemporary world is due to its appeal to reality, the claim that its Utopia is but the expression of an inevitable development. It professes that it can solve the problems insoluble by capitalism. Already, it claims, unemployment has vanished from Russia; and it boasts itself the liberator from the intolerable conditions of the world today. In Russia it attained power because it seemed to satisfy the craving of the masses for peace, and today it promises to free the entire world from the permanent threat of war produced by the rivalry of the capitalist and imperialist powers. In criticising Bolshevism we must never forget that it is a product of the bourgeois society and comes forward with the claim to organise society in such a fashion that the needs of all will be satisfied. It is a favourite reproach brought by the Bolsheviks against their opponents that at bottom they are nothing but practical materialists who put forward the intellectual life, culture and religion only for political and economic motives, as weapons to maintain their authority and advantageous economic position. The struggle against Bolshevism must not therefore be an uncritical defence of the existing social order. The Papal organ, the *Osservatore Romano*, in a

famous article on the Bolshevik blasphemies representing Christ as a screen for the activities of the exploiter, propounded the question: 'How could such blasphemies prove so effective and make such a powerful impression on the masses?' It answered by pointing out the need of fighting for a just social order.

It would be an entire mistake to conclude from the incompatibility of Bolshevism with religion of any kind, its disastrous practical results, and its development into a tyranny founded on force, that it is a phenomenon whose significance is wholly negative, which has simply entered as a force of evil into a healthy society radically defensible in spite of its shortcomings. On the contrary, Bolshevism must be regarded as a judgment upon the bourgeois society, an exposure of real abuses which had passed too long unregarded. It forces these abuses on our attention, and its significance lies in its warning against contentment with existing conditions.

Bolshevik materialism, its assertion that economics and politics are of supreme importance, cannot fail to produce a powerful impression upon a world which actually appears to regard the competition for economic and political power as the entire content of public life. Bolshevism arose as the result of political crises which plainly proved that the struggle for power between nations has no regard for the oft-vaunted watchwords, *justice* and *freedom*; and it dogs as their perilous shadow the economic crises which seem to show that in consequence of a wrong organisation the existing economic order cannot, despite over-production, supply all men with the necessities of life. It is the inevitable product of a world for which Christianity with its transcendental orientation has become a matter of private faith which no longer influences the organisation of public life.

In such circumstances Bolshevism seems the new truth,

the new religion, which gives significance to a life that has become meaningless and intolerable. By its economic experiments it appears to be bringing something new into a world grown selfish and impotent and tightly clutching its inheritance from the past. In contrast with all particularist movements of individual groups or nations, it seems to revive the conception of mankind and its history as a unity, in face of which all isolated political and economic struggles pale into insignificance, for it alone gives them a comprehensive and stupendous background. Entire sections of humanity which regard themselves as victims of the present situation, weary of relativism and postponement to a gradual evolution, are disposed to greet Bolshevism as something genuinely new, the redemption they are seeking. It allies itself with every movement inimical to the traditional culture, with the attitude which looks for catastrophic change and sees no salvation except in violent experiment. It takes advantage of the movements for national emancipation in Asia and the Colonies to expose the hypocrisy displayed by bourgeois European society throughout the entire world with its cries of justice and liberty. It supports all attacks upon the established order. No doubt in the process it has suffered many disappointments. The national revolution in China failed to become the proletarian revolution that the Soviet rulers had expected. But this does not alter the fact that Bolshevism feels itself an advancing movement gaining upon a world once progressive and now disillusioned; and this precisely because it has attained power in a region economically backward.

THE CHURCH BETWEEN BOLSHEVISM AND THE BOURGEOIS  
SOCIETY

The Christian's attitude to Bolshevism is not altogether simple, since the attraction of its Utopia depends on the existence of a social order which is anything but Christian. Nevertheless, however mistaken it would be to see no difference between the opposition of Christianity to Bolshevism and the opposition of the bourgeois society, the fact remains that the Bolshevik movement represents a very serious danger to the former. In the bourgeois society the Church can still carry on her work, although in practice increasingly losing her influence over public life and at best recognised only as a moral force within the community. Nevertheless, she can be active and preach her doctrines. This is true even of a state with such extremely anti-clerical laws as France. In the bourgeois society and its state the Church can make her voice heard. Even the anti-clerical state does not venture to promote atheism by the use of violence and the annexation of publicity in the hope of thus killing religion. However anti-clerical its professions, it dare not carry them out consistently. The bourgeois society and its state are too strongly anchored to a traditional culture moulded by Christianity. After a period during which the attempt is made to drive Christianity from public life and expel it from the privileged position held hitherto, religious neutrality must lead to a toleration of Christian activities and ecclesiastical propaganda. This tolerance and regard for tradition are alien to Bolshevism. It possesses a very definite philosophy of history, to whose fulfilment its state and economic experiments must minister. This philosophy finds the goal of humanity in the self-sufficient society. Bolshevism is thus essentially and wholeheartedly intolerant

of Christianity and the Church. It cannot therefore allow the Church to work freely within its society and state; in this respect its attitude is far more logical than that of the bourgeois state. It aims at the complete identification of public life and private belief. It is social atheism. Therefore every activity of the Church, all religious propaganda, is regarded as a sign of backwardness, a proof that its goal has not yet been reached.

Since Bolshevism is thus bound up with attempts to drive the Churches from public life, and since it increasingly restricts their possibilities of action—such temporary toleration as is granted being merely an admission that the social order is still very imperfect, and therefore due to considerations of expediency—it is easy to understand why the Church prefers the bourgeois social order and the bourgeois state. For there she can still be active, can still attempt to influence public life in a Christian sense, and there the social fabric still rests largely on traditional Christian foundations. However threatened by economic development and weakened by legislation permitting divorce, monogamy still enjoys special legal protection and securities. This means that bourgeois society, whatever its shortcomings, respects those human rights which Bolshevism refuses to recognise. The state is not the servant of a particular social creed, which is incompatible not only with Christianity, but with every form of religion. These are the facts which have ranged the Church on the side of the bourgeois society in the struggle against Bolshevism.

Besides the fundamental incompatibility between the Bolshevik Utopia—the self-sufficient society—and Christian doctrine, the political and social methods of Bolshevism are radically opposed to the teaching of the Church. As a result of its mechanical conception of society, which regards social reorganisation and transferences of power

from one group to another as means by which human nature can be changed, Bolshevism favours the use of force and such external methods as laws and decrees to overthrow the entire established order. It has no feeling for tradition, no regard for the results of the past. Whatever will not conform to the development it regards as necessary is fought by every means considered politically opportune, and the struggle is a war of extermination waged against particular social groups, against the classes denounced as exploiters. This is the justification of the political and social terrorism. There are social classes which in the interest of humanity—that is, of the future social society—must cease to exist.

This denial of that justice to which all citizens and members of society have a right by the Bolshevik state, which is deliberately organised as a party state of the proletarian class, contradicts the fundamental purpose of all political and social life. The general good has been deliberately rejected for the present, the period of transition, and has become an abstract ideal of the future. Moreover, for Bolshevism the general good is identified with the Socialist society, so that the injustice and cruelty of the present class war and the dictatorship of the proletariat promote the welfare of mankind as a whole. That is to say, an abstract conception of humanity justifies every violence and ruthless oppression in the present. Not only does such an attitude by its content, the self-sufficient Socialist society, contradict the Church's sense of reality; it is in conflict with her teaching by the very fact that it outlaws an entire class of human beings and treats them like noxious beasts to be destroyed by every available weapon. Considerations of humanity, disapproval of the Bolshevik terrorism founded on their faith in a future Utopia, determine the Church's opposition to Bolshevik rule. In this attitude she approves herself



the guardian of reality against the attempt to trample upon it in the name of alleged laws of evolution. It is therefore not Bolshevism but the Church which is fighting for humanity.

Bolshevism possesses distinctive sociological conceptions which it wishes to impose on all. For the Bolshevik it is obvious that technical progress is more important than respect for tradition and that the industrial proletariat is the class which must determine future development. It is obvious that large-scale industry must be the fundamental unit of the future society, and must therefore determine its foundations in contrast to the old order in which the family occupied this position. This belief, it is true, can appeal in its favour to many actual phenomena of life at the present day, which do in fact constitute a bond between Bolshevism and the bourgeois society. But are these tendencies to be approved and fostered? The social revolution effected by Bolshevism is moving in a direction that will not remove the evils that endanger and threaten the previous order. The appeal to actual tendencies of the bourgeois society, and a logical execution of the principles by which that society is governed, may give the champions of Bolshevism an advantage over those who for purely selfish reasons, from inertia or habit, refuse to carry those principles to their logical conclusion. But they can give them no advantage over those who accept the Catholic position. For the Church rejects capitalism with its division of society into a public sphere, subject only to purely natural laws, and a private sphere in which the spirit and religious beliefs may still be supreme, as decidedly as she rejects the attempt to overcome the cleavage by treating public life and society as absolute, an end in itself.

The struggle of the Church against Bolshevism—to sum up the principles on which it rests—must in no sense be

regarded, as the Bolsheviks affect to regard it, as waged in defence of the capitalism of bourgeois society. The Church's sole concern in combating Bolshevism is to secure for man the possibility of developing in accordance with his true nature. In the bourgeois society the Church can attempt to influence public life by making private life the base of her operations. Where Bolshevism bears sway this is no longer possible. For the whole of public life has been systematically monopolised by Bolshevism. Under Bolshevism the Church cannot permanently exist and work as a social group, but is increasingly suppressed. Bolshevism is an anti-church bent on destroying the Church of Christ. Its aim is to render the latter completely superfluous and establish itself in her place.

#### THE HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE OF BOLSHEVISM

The Christian, then, cannot possibly accept the Bolshevik Utopia, or even the Bolshevik transitional state with its social and political methods. But this fact leaves unanswered the question of the actual significance of Bolshevism, historical and social. What effects has its advent on the stage of history produced? What have been its actual results. Has it simply set up a tyranny in the name of a fallacious Utopia? Is it therefore a phenomenon without any radical social and historical significance? To answer this important question we must first protest against the conclusion that, because the doctrines and the political and social methods of Bolshevism are such as the Christian must reject, it is a purely negative force. This point of view is blind to the historical significance of its government and propaganda. May not it achieve particular results which, though they do not correspond with its doctrinal conceptions of the meaning of the historical process, are nevertheless of fundamental importance for the develop-

ment of history? May we not compare its effects with those of the French Revolution? The principles held by the leaders of the French Revolution were never, it is true, realised in the form they expected. Nevertheless, there can be no doubt that the French Revolution and its ideals, the universal rights of man, have moulded to an enormous extent the political and social order of the nineteenth century. They even compelled the Church to adopt new methods both in the care of souls and in other departments. She found herself obliged to take account of the liberal modern state, no longer founded on any religious belief—not indeed by changing her own principles, but by adapting her methods to contemporary conditions. Movements, therefore, which like the French Revolution appeared at the outset to reduce the Church to impotence, have given rise to an order in which she can live and work. Indeed, all Utopias which seek to erect on earth a kingdom of absolute freedom, equality, and justice are refuted by the fact that instead of permanently achieving their objective they lead to social regroupings and changes which they never contemplated.

It is, of course, extremely difficult at present to pronounce on the historical and social significance of Bolshevism. We must be careful to distinguish—and this is one of the principal conclusions of this study—between its position in Russian history and its influence as a social movement upon the world as a whole. In the history of Russia it is the power which has brought the backward regions of the old Russian empire into line with the industrialised world of modern capitalism. The Bolsheviks are fully justified when they stress the fact that they are doing their utmost to get rid of the old conception of dear Mother Russia. When Sorel, the French sociologist, compares Lenin with Peter the Great, he is undoubtedly right. It is very possible that the work accomplished by the Bolshevik Government

of Russia will be of the same nature as his Peter the Great brought Russia within the circle of the great political Powers. The Bolsheviks are raising its economic position, changing it from an object to a subject in the world's economic system. Bolshevism therefore increases the so-called Russian peril, inasmuch as it has modernised in an extraordinarily brief period an undeveloped economic domain. Whatever be the end of its government of Russia, it is extremely unlikely that the old Mother Russia will return. The entire structure of Russian society and economics has been too radically transformed. The classes that formerly governed have been replaced by new classes risen from the ranks of the people. It is naturally no easy task at present to estimate the future development of this Russian danger, which Bolshevism has thus introduced into the economic sphere. It may well be that, even if the plans for industrialisation are carried out within a surprisingly short space of time, it will be for a long while to come far less than we might expect. The internal market will absorb a large part of the new manufactured articles. It is possible, indeed, to erect in Russia the greatest motor works in Europe, but its success depends on the construction of good roads. And the construction of new railways on a large scale will also prove essential; for we must always bear in mind that a successful industrialisation of Russia will necessarily involve a rise in the standard of living, the end of the present poverty.<sup>4</sup>

But if the Bolsheviks may be rightly regarded as heirs of Peter the Great, the question which they themselves regard as all-important is not thereby answered. Have their methods of industrial and economic reconstruction proved that the systematic economics of Socialism are superior to our own, or is their economic system only the transference to the economic sphere of those centralising methods of absolutism which by applying compulsion have

built up those compact political units, the modern states? Von Beckerath regards the tendency to the absolutist state as the decisive feature of the contemporary period, and Carl Schmitt speaks of the movement towards what is called the totalitarian state, which seeks to embrace every sphere of life, and which no longer recognises the distinction between the state and society developed during the nineteenth century, since the supreme importance of economics is becoming more and more evident, particularly in times of crisis. Does the systematic and centralised economic and industrial achievement of Bolshevism simply mean that a land hitherto economically undeveloped, whose previous rulers had proved incompetent, is being industrialised at an artificial speed, as it were in a forcing-house? Is this centralised system therefore due only to the fact that in the old Russia social distinctions were so rudimentary and undeveloped? That is to say, does it simply mean that Bolshevism after driving out the groups formerly in power is bringing into action the masses who had hitherto stood almost entirely outside political and social life?

Were this explanation true, it would dispose of a considerable part of the fundamental claims of Bolshevism. And many facts can be adduced in its favour. The purely economic value of the systematic and centralised development has not yet been proved. The growth of bureaucracy, the difficulty of securing honest accountancy in spite of all the instructions issued and punishments meted out, and in spite of the increasing insistence on individual management and responsibility, do not augur well for the economic success of the new methods. They are justified and rendered possible solely by political and social reasons. Contemporary Russia must be regarded as a besieged state which by every possible means must secure its economic and political autonomy and must therefore disregard the expenditure and the human suffering necessary to attain

it. The actual success of countless industrial schemes is simply due to the hitherto untapped resources at their disposal. The most modern technical methods have been employed, and great results have naturally been secured.<sup>5</sup>

But it has been in no way proved that the economic development has actually followed the lines prescribed by the economic needs of the country. The plan imposed is a political and social device, a weapon of the legally unlimited dictatorship of the proletariat—in fact, of the Bolshevik Party—in order to achieve a particular social and economic development as quickly as possible. It can therefore be maintained that the success of the systematic industrialisation of Russia is due simply to its economic backwardness, the exclusion hitherto of the great mass of its population from all active share in social life. The results achieved by Bolshevik rule in Russia in no way disprove the assertion that its systematic industrialisation is but state capitalism wielded by a group in control of the state. The Bolshevik experiment proves nothing for or against the possibility of a systematic and centralised organisation of industry in a society socially and economically advanced, a society which has been moulded by capitalism.

But the influence of Bolshevism on Russia rests on its claim to introduce a new economic and social era. Its propaganda is based on the assertion that it does in fact represent something new, capable of preventing the economic and social crises from which the world has hitherto suffered. By this claim it appeals to those classes and groups which are opposed to the established order—for example, to the sense of vocation which inspires the Labour Movement. It incites oppressed nationalities to rebel, from China and the colonies to the nations which suffer worst from the Versailles Treaty. In this sphere its activity is confined to class or national agitation. It brings

no positive solutions of its own, but simply promotes revolutionary and social movements; and these have so far, when successful, produced forms of society which, like the present Government of China, in no way correspond with its intentions.

We may conclude that Bolshevism must be regarded as simply a disease of the existing order, incapable of creating superior political and social forms. It can but serve as a warning against actual social abuses. But it does not seem to possess the power to ally itself, as it has allied itself in Russia with particular national traditions and social conditions. The Communist parties have failed hitherto to develop a body of able leaders who can arouse and exploit the instincts of the masses so skilfully as the Russian Bolsheviks under Lenin in 1917. Even when they succeed, as they have in some cases succeeded, in winning large masses of followers, their adherents seem devoid of fixed political convictions—the product of conditions felt to be intolerable rather than a reliable body of supporters.

In Europe Bolshevism can only act as a solvent of the last links with tradition and culture, and the expression of a mental attitude which as a result of modern civilisation is blind to everything beyond the most elementary forms of social life. It cannot be a faith in something new, as in Russia, where civilisation had not been reached, and neither technology nor the Enlightenment was a dominant force. For that reason Bolshevism could assume, for large circles in Russia, the aspect of a new religion. Here in the West, on the contrary, though the essential constituents of its philosophy have been accepted unchanged from the West, Bolshevism must appear but one political and social theory amongst others, which can prove powerful only if an already capitalist world is shaken to its foundations by some crisis. The future of Bolshevism depends on the alternative before us. Will it be possible

to set up a political order that will reduce the causes of our world-wide unrest?<sup>6</sup> It is not without reason that the Bolsheviks are counting on a triumph in those countries which suffer most from the Treaty of Versailles, and which are therefore hit twice as severely by the economic crisis. The permanent establishment of political injustice in the world today is in fact one of the principal themes of their propaganda. It is not its philosophy that makes Bolshevism a danger to the world, but the fact that the world is clinging to an outlook that is no longer in harmony with social conditions. This leads to a struggle of all against all and a universal insecurity which constitutes an eloquent plea for Bolshevism. For it provides the Bolsheviks with an excuse for claiming to be the only believers in the world today, because they alone recognise a meaning in history which transcends the division of the world into spheres of influence.

From the historical standpoint, therefore, we may regard Bolshevism as a force which is compelling those responsible for the present world order to reflect upon the foundations of their government and upon the effects of their social action. It is among the powers which increase the general insecurity. To be sure, it offers no positive solutions; indeed, as the counterpart of the bourgeois society, it is too dependent upon it to be able genuinely to overcome it. But this does not dispose of its mission, which is to expose the contradiction between the actual condition of contemporary society and the ideas on which it is based. The limitations of parliamentary democracy, the absurdity of expecting an economic system left to the free play of its own forces to achieve harmonious self-regulation in a period of financial and industrial monopoly, have been convincingly proved by the Bolshevik propaganda.<sup>7</sup>

Bolshevism thus becomes a warning against satisfaction with existing conditions, a negative agent of social reform



Its very Utopias, the success of its methods of government and the results it has achieved, prove that the contemporary world has violated laws of social life; for example, the need of security and stability. Had they not been violated, faith in the Bolshevik Utopia could never have attained the powerful influence it exercises today. It is not enough to refute errors; one must overcome them by understanding their grounds. To this venerable truth Bolshevism is no exception.

## BOLSHEVIK DOCUMENTS



## I. LENIN

### THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE BOLSHEVIK PARTY

*In 1902 Lenin published a pamphlet, 'What is to be done?' in which he set out his views upon the organisation of the Socialist movement. It may be regarded as the best introduction to the essential doctrines of the Bolshevik Party, for its fundamental principles have not yet been superseded. They are, it is true, concealed, as are all Lenin's writings, behind a façade of polemics concerned with practical questions of the moment.*

*A few extracts<sup>1</sup> will prove how convinced the founder of the Bolshevik Party was of the necessity for political guidance of the masses. He goes so far as to attack all doctrines which attribute to the latter a creative 'spontaneity' and insist that Socialism must be taught to them by bourgeois intellectuals. His conception of the party has no room for blind adoration of the multitudes' passing whims. On the contrary, the masses must be led and educated by the party. And the party possesses a perfectly definite theoretical basis, namely Marxism. But we must not forget that the theory serves the requirements of the practical movement. Moreover, the vocation which Lenin ascribes to the Russian revolutionaries is particularly worth noting. The overthrow of Tsarism could, in his opinion, make the Russian proletariat the advance-guard of the proletariat throughout the entire world. Lenin's whole conception of the party is strongly influenced by the special conditions of Russian life. We may even say that it is the opposite of German Socialism, which, in spite of the special legislation to which the Socialists were subject, has developed under entirely different conditions.*

<sup>1</sup> From the English translation of Lenin's Works (by courtesy of Martin Lawrence Ltd.).

*Against free expression of opinion in the party*

'Freedom' is a grand word, but under the banner of Free Trade the most predatory wars were conducted; under the banner of 'free labour,' the toilers were robbed. The term 'freedom of criticism' contains the same inherent falsehood. Those who are really convinced that they have advanced science, would demand, not freedom for the new views to continue side by side with the old, but the substitution of new views for the old. The cry, 'Long live freedom of criticism,' that is heard to-day, too strongly calls to mind the fable of the empty barrel.<sup>1</sup>

We are marching in a compact group along a precipitous and difficult path, firmly holding each other by the hand. We are surrounded on all sides by enemies, and are under their almost constant fire. We have combined voluntarily, especially for the purpose of fighting the enemy and not to retreat into the adjacent marsh, whose inhabitants have from the very outset reproached us with having separated ourselves into an exclusive group, and with having chosen the path of struggle instead of the path of conciliation. And now several in our crowd begin to cry out, 'Let us go into this marsh!' And when we begin to shame them, they retort, 'How conservative you are! Are you not ashamed to deny us the right to invite you to take a better road?'

Oh yes, gentlemen! You are free, not only to invite us, but to go yourselves wherever you will, even into the marsh. In fact, we think that the marsh is your proper place, and we are prepared to render *you* every assistance to get there. Only, let go of our hands, don't clutch at us, and don't besmirch the grand word 'freedom'; for we too

<sup>1</sup> [The allusion here is Krylov's fable about the full and empty barrels rolling down the street, the second with much more noise than the first.]

are 'free' to go where we please; free to fight not only against the marsh, but also against those who are turning towards the marsh.

*The importance of a revolutionary theory*

Without a revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement. This cannot be insisted upon too strongly at a time when the fashionable preaching of opportunism is combined with absorption in the *narrowest* forms of practical activity. The Social-Democratic movement is essentially an international movement. This does not mean merely that we must combat national chauvinism. It means also that a movement that is starting in a young country can be successful only on the condition that it assimilates the experience of other countries. In order to assimilate this experience, it is not sufficient merely to be acquainted with it, or simply to transcribe the latest resolutions. A critical attitude is required towards this experience, and ability to subject it to independent tests. Only those who realise how much the modern Labour movement has grown in strength will understand what a reserve of theoretical forces and political (as well as revolutionary) experience is required to fulfil this task.

The national tasks of Russian Social-Democracy are such as have never confronted any other Socialist party in the world. Further on we shall deal with the political and organisational duties which the task of emancipating the whole people from the yoke of autocracy imposes upon us. At the moment, we wish merely to state that the *rôle of vanguard can be fulfilled only by a party that is guided by an advanced theory*. To understand what this means concretely, let the reader call to mind the predecessors of Russian Social-Democracy like Herzen, Belinsky, Chernyshevsky and the brilliant band of revolutionists of the seventies; let him ponder over the world significance which

Russian literature is now acquiring, let him. . . . Oh! But that is enough!

*The Russian vocation*

The Russian workers will have to undergo trials immeasurably more severe; they will have to take up the fight against a monster, compared with which anti-Socialist laws in a constitutional country are but pigmies. History has now confronted us with an immediate task which is *more revolutionary than all the immediate tasks* that confront the proletariat of any other country. The fulfilment of this task, the destruction of the most powerful bulwark, not only of European, but also (it may now be said) of Asiatic reaction, places the Russian proletariat in the vanguard of the international revolutionary proletariat. We shall have the right to count upon acquiring the honourable title already earned by our predecessors, the revolutionaries of the seventies, if we succeed in inspiring our movement—which is a thousand times wider and deeper—with the same devoted determination and vigour.

*The intelligentsia as the missionary of Socialism*

In the previous chapter we pointed out how universally absorbed the educated youth of Russia was with the theories of Marxism in the middle of the nineties. The strikes that followed the famous St. Petersburg industrial war of 1896 also assumed a similar wholesale character. The fact that those strikes spread over the whole of Russia shows how deep the reviving popular movement was, and if we must speak of the 'spontaneous element' then, of course, we must admit that this strike movement certainly bore a spontaneous character. But there are different kinds of spontaneity. Strikes occurred in Russia in the seventies, and in the sixties (and even in the first half of the nineteenth century), and these strikes were accompanied by the

'spontaneous' destruction of machinery, and so forth. Compared with these 'revolts' the strikes of the nineties can almost be described as 'conscious,' to such an extent do they mark the progress that the Labour movement had made since that period.

This shows that the 'spontaneous element' in essence represents nothing more or less than consciousness *in an embryonic form*. Even the primitive rebellions expressed the awakening of consciousness to a certain extent. The workers abandoned their age-long faith in the permanence of the system that oppressed them. They began—I will not say to understand, but to feel the necessity for collective resistance, and emphatically abandoned their slavish submission to their superiors. But all this was more in the nature of outbursts of desperation and vengeance than *struggle*. The strikes of the nineties revealed far greater flashes of consciousness. Definite demands were put forward, the time to strike was carefully chosen, known cases and examples in other places were discussed, and so on.

While the revolts were simply uprisings of the oppressed, the systematic strikes represented the class struggle in embryo; but only in embryo. Taken by themselves, these strikes were simply trade-union struggles, but not yet Social-Democratic struggles. They testified to the awakening antagonisms between workers and employers; but the workers were not and could not be *conscious of the irreconcilable antagonism of their interests to the whole of the modern political and social system; in other words, they lacked Social-Democratic consciousness*. In this sense the strikes of the nineties, in spite of the enormous progress they represented as compared with the 'revolts,' represented a purely spontaneous movement.

We said that there *could not yet* be Social-Democratic consciousness among the workers. The consciousness could



only be brought to them from without. *The history of all countries shows that by its own exclusive effort the working class is able to develop only trade-union consciousness. It may itself realise the necessity for continuing in unions to fight against the employers and to strive to compel the Government to pass necessary labour legislation, and the like. But the theory of Socialism grew out of the philosophic, historical, and economic theories that were elaborated by the educated representatives of the propertied classes, the intellectuals. The very founders of modern scientific Socialism, Marx and Engels, themselves belonged to the bourgeois intelligentsia. Similarly in Russia, the theoretical doctrine of Social-Democracy arose quite independently of the spontaneous growth of the Labour movement; it arose as a national and legitimate outcome of the development of ideas among the revolutionary Socialist intelligentsia.*

*Against the spontaneous development of the Labour movement*

To belittle Socialist ideology in any way, to deviate from it in the slightest degree means strengthening bourgeois ideology. There is a lot of talk about spontaneity, but the *spontaneous* development of the Labour movement leads to its becoming subordinated to bourgeois ideology; it means developing according to the programme of the *Credo*, for the spontaneous Labour movement is pure and simple trade-unionism, is *Nur-Gewerkschaftlererei*; and trade-unionism means the ideological subordination of the workers to the bourgeoisie. Hence our task, the task of Social-Democracy, is to *combat spontaneity*, to *divert* the Labour movement, with its spontaneous trade-unionist striving, from under the wing of the bourgeoisie, and to bring it under the wing of revolutionary Social-Democracy. The phrases employed by the authors of the 'economic' letter in *Iskra*, No. 12, about the efforts of the most inspired ideologists not being able to divert the Labour movement from the path that is determined by the interaction of the material elements and the material

environment *are tantamount to the abandonment of Socialism*, and if only the authors of this letter fearlessly thought out what they say to its logical conclusion, as everyone who enters into the arena of literary and public activity should, they would have nothing else to do but 'fold their useless arms over their empty breasts' and . . . leave the field of action to the Struves and Prokopoviches who are dragging the Labour movement 'along the line of least resistance,' i.e. along the line of bourgeois trade-unionism, or to the Zubatovs who are dragging it along the line of clerical and gendarme 'ideology.'

But why, the reader will ask, does the spontaneous movement, the movement along the line of least resistance, lead to the domination of bourgeois ideology? For the simple reason that bourgeois ideology is far older in origin than Social-Democratic ideology, because it is more fully developed, and because it possesses *immeasurably* more opportunities for becoming widespread.<sup>1</sup> And the younger the Socialist movement is in any given country, the more vigorously must it fight against all attempts to entrench non-Socialist ideology, and the more strongly must it warn the workers against those bad counsellors who shout against 'exaggerating the conscious elements,' and so on. We have become convinced that the fundamental error committed by the 'new tendency' in Russian Social-Democracy lies in its subservience to spontaneity, and its failure to understand that the spontaneity of the masses

<sup>1</sup> It is often said 'The working class *spontaneously* gravitates towards Socialism. This is perfectly true in the sense that Socialist theory defines the causes of the poverty of the working class more profoundly and more correctly than any other theory, and for that reason the workers are able to appreciate it more easily—*provided*, however, that this theory does not step aside for spontaneity, and *provided* it subordinates spontaneity to itself. The working class spontaneously gravitates towards Socialism; nevertheless bourgeois ideology, being more widespread and continuously revived in the most diverse forms, imposes itself spontaneously upon the working class more than any other

demands a mass of consciousness from us Social-Democrats. The more spontaneously the masses rise, the more widespread the movement becomes, so much the more rapidly grows the demand for greater consciousness in the theoretical, political and organisational work of Social-Democracy.

The spontaneous rise of the masses in Russia has proceeded (and continues) with such rapidity that the young untrained Social-Democrats have proved unfitted for the gigantic tasks confronting them. This lack of training is our common misfortune, the misfortune of *all* Russian Social-Democrats. The rise of the masses has proceeded and spread uninterruptedly and continuously; it has not only continued in the places it began in, but has spread to new localities and to new strata of the population (influenced by the Labour movement, the ferment among the students and the intellectuals generally, and even among the peasantry, has revived). Revolutionaries, however, have *lagged behind* this rise of the masses both in their 'theories' and in their practical activity; they have failed to establish an uninterrupted organisation having continuity with the past, and capable of leading the whole movement.

### *The political character of Social-Democracy*

Social-Democrats lead the struggle of the working class not only for better terms for the sale of labour power, but also for the abolition of the social system which compels the propertyless class to sell itself to the rich. Social-Democracy represents the working class, not in its relation to a given group of employers, but in its relation to all classes in modern society, to the state as an organised political force. Hence, it follows that Social-Democrats must not only not confine themselves entirely to the economic struggle; they must not even allow the organisation of economic exposures to become the predominant

part of their activities. We must actively take up the political education of the working class, and the development of its political consciousness. Revolutionary Social-Democracy has always included, and now includes in its activities the fight for reforms. But it utilises 'economic' agitation for the purpose of presenting to the government, not only demands for all sorts of measures, but also (and primarily) the demand that it cease to be an autocratic government. Moreover, it considers it to be its duty to present this demand to the government, not on the basis of the economic struggle *alone*, but on the basis of all manifestations of public and political life. In a word, it subordinates the struggle for reforms to the revolutionary struggle for liberty and for Socialism, in the same way as the part is subordinate to the whole. As a matter of fact, it is possible to 'raise the activity of the masses of the workers' *only* provided this activity is *not restricted entirely* to 'political agitation on an economic basis.' And one of the fundamental conditions for the necessary expansion of political agitation is the organisation of *all-sided* political exposure. In *no other way* can the masses be trained in political consciousness and revolutionary activity except by means of such exposures.

Working-class consciousness cannot be genuinely political consciousness unless the workers are trained to respond to all cases of tyranny, oppression, violence and abuse, no matter *what class* is affected. Moreover, that response must be a Social-Democratic response, and not one from any other point of view. The consciousness of the masses of the workers cannot be genuine class consciousness unless the workers learn to observe from concrete, and above all from topical, political facts and events, *every* other social class and *all* the manifestations of the intellectual, ethical and political life of these classes; unless they learn to apply practically the materialist analysis and the materialist

estimate of *all* aspects of the life and activity of *all* classes, strata and groups of the population.

Those who concentrate the attention, observation and consciousness of the working class exclusively, or even mainly, upon itself alone, are not Social-Democrats; because, for its self-realisation the working class must have not only a theoretical, rather it would be more true to say, not so much a theoretical, as a practical understanding, acquired through experience of political life, of the relationships between *all* classes of modern society. That is why the idea preached by our economists, that the economic struggle is the most widely applicable means of drawing the masses into the political movement, is so extremely harmful and extremely reactionary in practice. In order to become a Social-Democrat, a working man must have a clear picture in his mind of the economic nature and the social and political features of the landlord, of the priest, of the high state official, of the peasant, of the student, and of the tramp; he must know their strong and weak sides, he must understand all the catch-words and sophisms by which each class and each stratum camouflages its egotistical strivings and its real 'nature'; he must understand what interests certain institutions and certain laws reflect, and how they are reflected. The working man cannot obtain this 'clear picture' from books. He can obtain it only from living examples and from exposures, following hot after their occurrence, of what goes on around us at a given moment, of what is being discussed, in whispers perhaps, by each one in his own way, of the meaning of such and such events, of such and such statistics, in such and such court sentences, etc., etc., etc. These universal political exposures are an essential and *fundamental* condition for training the masses in revolutionary activity.

Why is it that the Russian workers as yet display so little revolutionary activity about the brutal way in which the

police maltreat the people, about the persecution of the religious sects, the flogging of the peasantry, the outrageous censorship, the torture of soldiers, the persecution of the most innocent cultural enterprises, and so forth? Is it because the 'economic struggle' does not 'stimulate' them to this, because such political activity does not 'promise palpable results,' because it produces little that is 'positive'? To advance this argument, we repeat, is merely to shift the blame to the shoulders of others, to blame the masses of the workers for our own philistinism (and Bernsteinism). We must blame ourselves, our remoteness from the mass movement; we must blame ourselves for being unable as yet to organise a sufficiently wide, striking, and rapid exposure of these despicable outrages. When we do that (and we must and can do it), the most backward worker will understand, *or will feel*, that the students and religious sects, the *muzhiks* and the authors, are being abused and outraged by the very same dark forces that are oppressing and crushing him at every step of his life; and, feeling that, he himself will be filled with an irresistible desire to respond to these things. And then one day he will organise cat-calls against the censors; another day he will demonstrate outside the house of the provincial governor, who has brutally suppressed peasant uprisings; another day he will teach a lesson to the gendarmes in surplices, who are doing the work of the Holy Inquisition. . . .

*A plea for the organisation of a body of professional revolutionaries*

*Rabocheye Dyelo's* assertions that the economic struggle is the most widely applicable means of political agitation, that our task now is to give the economic struggle itself a political character, and so on, express a restricted view not only of our political tasks, but also of our *organisational* tasks. The 'economic struggle against the employers and the Government' does not in the least require—and there-

fore such a struggle can never give rise to—an all-Russian centralised organisation that will combine, in a general attack, all the numerous manifestations of political opposition, protest and indignation; an organisation that will consist of professional revolutionaries and be led by the real political leaders of the whole people. And this can be easily understood.

Subservience to spontaneously rising forms of organisation, the lack of appreciation of the narrowness and primitiveness of our organisational work, of our 'primitive methods' in this most important sphere, the lack of such appreciation, I say, is a very serious complaint that our movement suffers from.

I shall describe the activity of a typical Social-Democratic circle of the period of 1894-1901. We have already referred to the manner in which the students became absorbed in Marxism at that period. Of course, these students were interested in Marxism not so much as a theory; they were interested in it because it provided the answer to the question: 'What is to be done?' because it was a call to march against the enemy. And these young warriors marched to battle with astonishingly primitive equipment and training. In a vast number of cases they had almost no equipment, and absolutely no training. They marched to war like peasants from the plough, snatching up a club. A students' circle—with no contacts with the old members of the movement, no contacts with circles in other districts, or even in other parts of the same city (or with other schools), with the various sections of the revolutionary work in no way organised, with no systematic plan of activity covering any length of time—establishes contacts with the workers and sets to work. It gradually expands its propaganda and agitation; by its activities it wins the sympathies of a rather large circle of workers and of a certain section of the educated classes, which provides

it with money, and from which the 'committee' recruits new groups of members. The fascination which the 'committee' (or the 'league of struggle') exercises on the youth increases, its sphere of activity becomes wider, and its activities expand quite spontaneously; the very people who a year or a few months previously had spoken at the gatherings of the students' circles and discussed the question, 'Whither?' who established and maintained contacts with the workers, who wrote and published leaflets, who established contacts with other groups of revolutionists and procured literature, now set to work to establish a local newspaper, begin to talk about organising demonstrations, and finally start open conflicts (these open conflicts may, according to circumstances, take the form of issuing the very first agitational leaflet, or the first newspaper, or of organising the first demonstration). And usually, the first action ends in immediate and complete defeat. Immediate and complete, precisely because these open conflicts have not been the result of a systematic and carefully thought-out and gradually prepared plan for a prolonged and stubborn struggle, but simply the spontaneous growth of traditional circle work; because naturally, the police, almost in every case, have known the principal leaders of the local movement, for in their schooldays they have already 'recommended' themselves to the police, who have only waited for a convenient day to make their raid. They have given the circle sufficient time to develop its work so that they may obtain a palpable *corpus delicti*,<sup>1</sup> and they have always allowed several of the persons known to them to remain at liberty for *razvodka* (which, I believe is the technical term used both by our people and by the gendarmes).<sup>2</sup> One

<sup>1</sup> [Offence within the meaning of the law]

<sup>2</sup> [Literally for 'breeding purposes,' i.e. to breed more victims for the police net. By allowing them to be at liberty, and by shadowing their movements, the police were able to use them as innocent tools to betray the whereabouts of other revolutionaries as yet unknown to them.]



cannot help comparing this kind of warfare with that conducted by a mob of peasants armed with clubs against modern troops. One can only express astonishment at the virility displayed by the movement, which expanded, grew and won victories in spite of the lack of training among the fighters. It is true that from the historical point of view the primitiveness of equipment was not only inevitable at first, but even *legitimate* as one of the conditions for the wide recruiting of fighters; but as soon as serious operations began (and they began in fact with the strikes in the summer of 1896), the defects in our fighting organisations made themselves felt to an increasing extent.

The fact that the local active workers were hopelessly scattered, the casual manner in which the membership of the circles were recruited, the lack of training in and narrow outlook on theoretical, political and organisational questions was all the inevitable result of the conditions described above. Things reached such a pass that in several places the workers, because of our lack of stamina and ability to maintain secrecy, began to lose faith in the intelligentsia and to avoid them. The intellectuals, they said, are much too careless, and lay themselves open to police raids!

#### *How to build up the organisation*

I assert (i) that no movement can be durable without a stable organisation of leaders to maintain continuity; (ii) that the more widely the masses are drawn into the struggle and form the basis of the movement, the more necessary is it to have such an organisation, and the more stable must it be (for it is much easier then for demagogues to side-track the more backward sections of the masses); (iii) that the organisation must consist chiefly of persons engaged in revolution as a profession; (iv) that in a country with a despotic government, the more we *restrict* the

membership of this organisation to persons who are engaged in revolution as a profession and who have been professionally trained in the art of combating the political police, the more difficult will it be to catch the organisation; and (v) the *wider* will be the circle of men and women of the working class or of other classes of society able to join the movement and perform active work in it.

To concentrate all secret functions in the hands of as small a number of professional revolutionaries as possible, does not mean that these will 'do the thinking for all' and that the crowd will not take an active part in the *movement*. On the contrary, the crowd will advance from its ranks increasing numbers of professional revolutionaries, for it will know that it is not enough for a few students and working men waging economic war to gather together and form a 'committee,' but that professional revolutionaries must be trained for years; the crowd will 'think' not of primitive ways but of training professional revolutionaries. The centralisation of the secret functions of the *organisation* does not mean the concentration of all the functions of the *movement*. The active participation of the greatest masses in the dissemination of illegal literature will not diminish because a dozen professional revolutionaries concentrate in their hands the secret part of the work; on the contrary, it will *increase* tenfold. Only in this way will the reading of illegal literature, the contribution to illegal literature, and to some extent even the distribution of illegal literature *almost cease to be secret work*, for the police will soon come to realise the folly and futility of setting the whole judicial and administrative machine into motion to intercept every copy of a publication that is being broadcast in thousands. This applies not only to the Press, but to every function of the movement, even to demonstrations. The active and widespread participation of the masses will not suffer, on the contrary, it will benefit by the fact that a 'dozen'

experienced revolutionaries, no less professionally trained than the police, will concentrate all the secret side of the work in their hands—prepare leaflets, work out approximate plans, and appoint bodies of leaders for each town district, for each factory district, and for each educational institution (I know that exception will be taken to my 'undemocratic' views, but I shall reply to this altogether unintelligent objection later on). The centralisation of the more secret functions in an organisation of revolutionaries will not diminish, but rather increase the extent and the quality of the activity of a large number of other organisations intended for wide membership and which can therefore be as loose and as public as possible, for example trade unions, workers' circles for self-education and the reading of illegal literature, Socialist and also democratic circles for *all* other sections of the population, and so forth. We must have *as large a number as possible* of such organisations with the widest possible variety of functions, but it is absurd and dangerous to *confuse these with organisations of revolutionaries*, to erase the line of demarcation between them, to dim still more the already incredibly hazy appreciation by the masses that to 'serve' the mass movement we must have people who will devote themselves exclusively to Social-Democratic activities, and that such people must *rain* themselves patiently and steadfastly to be professional revolutionaries.

Yes, this consciousness has become incredibly dim. The most grievous sin we have committed in regard to organisation is that *by our primitiveness we have lowered the prestige of revolutionaries in Russia*. A man who is weak and vacillating on theoretical questions, who has a narrow outlook, who makes excuses for his own slackness on the ground that the masses are awakening spontaneously, who resembles a trade-union secretary more than a people's tribune, who is unable to conceive a broad and bold plan, who is in-

capable of inspiring even his enemies with respect for himself, and who is inexperienced and clumsy in his own professional art—the art of combating the political police—such a man is not a revolutionary but a hopeless amateur!

Let no active worker take offence at these frank remarks, for as far as insufficient training is concerned, I apply them first and foremost to myself. I used to work in a circle that set itself a great and all-embracing task; every member of that circle suffered to the point of torture from the realisation that we were proving ourselves to be amateurs at a moment in history when we might have been able to say, paraphrasing a well-known epigram: ‘Give us an organisation of revolutionaries, and we shall overturn the whole of Russia!’ And the more I recall the burning sense of shame I then experienced, the more bitter are my feelings towards those pseudo-Social-Democrats whose teachings bring disgrace on the calling of a revolutionary, who fail to understand that our task is not to degrade the revolutionary to the level of an amateur, but to *exalt* the amateur to the level of a revolutionary.

### *The need for everyday work*

It would be a grievous error indeed to build up the party organisation in the expectation only of outbreaks and street fighting, or only upon the ‘forward march of the drab, everyday struggle.’ We must *always* carry on our everyday work and always be prepared for everything, because very frequently it is almost impossible to foresee beforehand when periods of outbreaks will give way to periods of calm. And even in those cases when it is possible to do so, it will not be possible to utilise this foresight for the purpose of reconstructing our organisation, because in an autocratic country these changes from turmoil to calm take place with astonishing rapidity and are sometimes due merely to a single night raid by the Tsarist janissaries. And

the revolution itself must not by any means be regarded as a single act but as a series of more or less powerful outbreaks rapidly alternating with more or less intense calm. For that reason, the principal content of the activity of our party organisation, the 'trick' of this activity, should be to carry on work that is possible and necessary both in the period of the most powerful outbreaks as well as in periods of complete calm; that is to say, work of political agitation linked up over the whole of Russia, which will enlighten all aspects of life and will be carried on among the broadest possible strata of the masses.

#### REVOLUTIONARY STRATEGY IN 1917

##### I

*When still in Switzerland Lenin began to develop his programme. On March 31–April 2, 1917, he published an article in the *Züricher Volksrecht*, in which he insisted on the necessity for a proletarian state.*

What tactics, then, is the proletariat to pursue? We are now undergoing a transition from the first to the second stage of the revolution, from the revolt against Tsarism to the revolt against the bourgeoisie, against the imperialist war—a *transition* to the [French] Convention, which may evolve from the Constituent Assembly, should the Government actually keep its promise and convoke it.

The special task of the present moment is to *organise the proletariat*; but not into the old accepted form of organisation which the traitors to Socialism, the Social-Patriots, the opportunists in all countries consider sufficient, but into a *revolutionary organisation*. This organisation must, first, be universal; secondly, it must combine *military and state functions*.

Marx teaches us, on the basis of the experience of the Commune of 1871, that 'the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state-machine and make it serve its own purposes.' The proletariat must *smash* this machine (the army, the police, the bureaucracy). It is this that the opportunists are denying or minimising. This is the *most important* practical lesson to be learned from the Paris Commune and the Russian Revolution of 1905.

We are different from the Anarchists in that we recognise that a *government* is necessary to accomplish a revolutionary overturn. But we differ from the opportunists and the Kautskians in that we insist that we do not need a 'ready-made state-machine' as it exists in democratic bourgeois republics, but *actual power in the hands of the armed and organised workers*. This is the government that we need. In their essence the Commune of 1871 and the *Soviets of Workers' Deputies* in Russia in 1905 and 1917 were just such a government. On this foundation we must build further.

## II

*Immediately on his return to Petersburg Lenin produced his celebrated 'April Theses,' which aroused opposition even within the ranks of his own party:*

(i) In our attitude toward the war not the slightest concession must be made to 'revolutionary defencism,'<sup>1</sup> for under the new government of Lvov and Co., owing to the capitalist nature of this Government, the war on Russia's part remains a predatory imperialist war.

The class-conscious proletariat may give its consent to a revolutionary war actually justifying revolutionary defencism, only on condition (a) that all power be transferred to the proletariat and its ally, the poorest section of the peasantry; (b) that all annexations be renounced in deeds,

<sup>1</sup> I.e. defence of the present bourgeois Government —W.G.

not merely in words; (c) that there be a complete break, in practice, with all interests of capital.

In view of the undoubted honesty of the mass of rank-and-file representatives of revolutionary defencism who accept the war only as a necessity and not as a means of conquest, in view of their deception by the bourgeoisie, it is necessary, most thoroughly, persistently, patiently to explain to them their error, to explain the inseparable connection between capital and the imperialist war, to prove that without the overthrow of capital it is *impossible* to conclude the war with a really democratic, non-oppressive peace.

This view is to be widely propagated among the army units in the field: Fraternisation.

(ii) The peculiarity of the present situation in Russia is that it represents a transition from the *first* stage of the revolution—which, because of the inadequate organisation and insufficient class-consciousness of the proletariat, led to the assumption of power by the bourgeoisie—to its *second* stage, which is to place power in the hands of the proletariat and the poorest strata of the peasantry.

This transition is characterised, on the one hand, by a maximum of legality (Russia is *now* the freest of all the belligerent countries of the world); on the other, by the absence of oppression of the masses, and, finally, by the trustingly ignorant attitude of the masses toward the capitalist government, the worst enemy of peace and Socialism.

This peculiar situation demands of us an ability to adapt ourselves to the *specific* conditions of party work amidst vast masses of the proletariat just awakened to political life.

(iii) No support to the Provisional Government; exposure of the utter falsity of all its promises, particularly those relating to the renunciation of annexations. Un-

masking, instead of admitting, the illusion-breeding 'demand' that *this* Government, a Government of capitalists, *cease* being imperialistic. . . .

(iv) Not a parliamentary republic—a return to it from the Soviet of Workers' Deputies would be a step backward—but a republic of Soviets of Workers', Agricultural Labourers' and Peasants' Deputies throughout the land, from top to bottom

Abolition of the police, the army,<sup>1</sup> the bureaucracy.

All officers to be elected and to be subject to recall at any time; their salaries not to exceed the average wage of a competent worker.

(v) In the agrarian programme, the emphasis must be shifted to the Soviets of Agricultural Labourers' Deputies

Confiscation of all private lands.

Nationalisation of *all* lands in the country, and management of such lands by local Soviets of Agricultural Labourers' and Peasants' Deputies. A separate organisation of Soviets of Deputies of the poorest peasants. Creation of model agricultural establishments out of large estates (from one hundred to three hundred *desiatinas*,<sup>2</sup> in accordance with local and other conditions and with the estimates of local institutions) under the control of the Soviet of Agricultural Labourers' Deputies, and at public expense.

(vi) Immediate merger of all the banks in the country into one general national bank, over which the Soviet of Workers' Deputies should have control.

(vii) Not the 'introduction' of Socialism as an *immediate* task, but the immediate placing of the Soviet of Workers' Deputies in *control* of social production and distribution of goods.

<sup>1</sup> [Substituting for the standing army the universal arming of the people]

<sup>2</sup> [A *desiatina* equals 2.7 acres.]



## III

*From a report to the Petrograd City Conference of the Bolshevik Party  
April 14 [27]*

What is the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies? Its class significance is direct power. Complete political freedom we have not, of course. But nowhere else is there such freedom as exists in Russia. 'Down with war' does not mean to fling the bayonet away. It means the passing of power to another class. The thing on which all our present efforts must be concentrated is to explain that. Blanquism consisted in an effort to seize power by relying on the support of a minority. With us it is quite different. We are as yet a minority; we realise the need of winning a majority. Unlike the Anarchists, we need the state for the transition to Socialism. The Paris Commune furnished an example of a state of the type of the Soviet of Workers' Deputies, an example of direct power held by organised and armed workers, an example of the dictatorship of workers and peasants. The rôle of the Soviets, the import of such a dictatorship, is in applying organised force against the counter-revolution, in safeguarding the conquests of the revolution for the benefit of the majority and with the support of the majority. There can be no dual power in a state. The Soviets of Deputies represent a type of state where the existence of a police is impossible. Here the people are their own rulers, and a return to monarchy is impossible. The army and the people must merge into one—therein lies the triumph of liberty! Everyone must be in possession of arms. To retain freedom, a universal arming of the people is indispensable. This is the essence of the Commune. We are not Anarchists who deny organised government, i.e. force in general, particularly a state maintained by the organised and armed workers them-

selves through the Soviets. Life has interlocked the dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry with the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. The next stage is the dictatorship of the proletariat, but the proletariat is not yet sufficiently organised and enlightened; it must be enlightened. Such Soviets of Workers', Peasants', and other Deputies should be organised all over the country: life demands it. There is no other way. . . . This is the Paris Commune! The Soviet of Workers' Deputies is not a trade union, as the bourgeoisie would like it to be. The people view it differently and more correctly: the people regard it as a Government power. In the triumph of the Soviet of Workers' Deputies, they see a way out of the war. This is the type of government under which it is possible to advance toward Socialism. Should a group seize power, it would not mean much. The Russian Revolution has risen higher. any government other than the Soviet is impossible, and this is what the bourgeoisie fears. As long as the Soviets have not assumed power, we will not seize it. A living force, however, must impel the Soviets to seize power. Otherwise we shall never get out of the war which the capitalists are carrying on by deceiving the people. All countries are on the brink of ruin; we ought to realise this; there is no way out except through a Socialist revolution. The Government must be overthrown, but not everybody has a clear understanding of it. If the power of the Provisional Government rests on the Soviet of Workers' Deputies, then you cannot 'just' overthrow it. The only way it can and must be overthrown is by winning over the majority in the Soviets. Either we go forward toward the full power of the Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, or we go back to the imperialist war—there is no other alternative.

## IV

*From a Report to the All-Russian Conference of the Bolshevik Party  
April 24 [May 7]*

We are all agreed that power should be in the hands of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. But what can and what must they do if power passes to them—that is, if it is in the hands of proletarians and semi-proletarians? We are confronted with an involved and difficult problem. Indeed, with regard to the transfer of power, we are aware of one danger that has played a disastrous rôle in former revolutions, that of the revolutionary class's not knowing what to do with power after it has gained it. History offers many examples of revolutions that failed because of this. The Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, spreading the network of their organisation over all Russia, are at this moment the central force of the revolution; it seems to me, however, that we have not sufficiently studied or understood them. Should they seize power, they would not constitute a state in the ordinary sense of that word. The world has never yet seen such a state functioning for any considerable length of time, but the proletarian movement of the world has been approaching such a state. That state would be constructed on the pattern of the Paris Commune. Such power is a dictatorship; that is, it rests not on the law, not on the formal will of the majority, but on direct and open force. Force is the instrument of power. How, then, will the Soviets apply this power? Will they revert to the old way of governing by police? Will they carry on the government by means of the old organs of power? This they cannot do, I think. At any rate, they will be faced with the immediate task of creating a state that is not bourgeois.

Among Bolsheviks, I have compared this state to the

Paris Commune in the sense that the latter had destroyed the old administrative organs and had replaced them by perfectly new ones that were direct and immediate organs of the workers. I am blamed for using a word now exceedingly frightening to the capitalists, for they have begun to interpret it as a desire for the immediate introduction of Socialism. I have used it, however, only in the sense of replacing old organs by new proletarian organs. Marx regarded that as the greatest advance of the proletarian movement of the world. To us the question of the social tasks of the proletariat is of enormous practical importance. First because we are at the present moment bound up with all the other countries, and are unable to free ourselves from this tangle: that is to say, the proletariat will either free itself as a whole or it will be crushed. Secondly, the existence of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies is an established fact. No one doubts that they have spread over the whole of Russia, that they are a state power, and that there can be no other power. If this is so, then we ought to make clear to ourselves how the Soviets are likely to use their power. It is asserted that the power of the Soviets is the same as in France or America, but there is nothing like it in those countries; such a direct power does not exist there.

What, then, are the tasks of the revolutionary proletariat? The main flaw, the main error, in all Socialist discussions is that this question is put in too general a form—the transition to Socialism. What we should discuss is concrete steps and measures. Some of these are ripe, some are not. We are now in the midst of a transition period. Clearly, we have brought to the fore new forms, forms different from those to be found in bourgeois states. The Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies are a form of state without any parallel. It is a form that represents the first steps toward Socialism, and is inevitable as the first stage

in the development of a Socialist society. This is a fact of decisive importance. The Russian Revolution has created the Soviets. No bourgeois country in the world has or can have such state institutions. No Socialist revolution can function with any other state power. The Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies must seize power not for the purpose of building an ordinary bourgeois republic, nor for the purpose of introducing Socialism immediately. The latter could not be accomplished. What, then, is the purpose? They must seize power in order to take the first concrete steps towards introducing Socialism, steps that can and should be made. In this case fear is the greatest enemy. The masses should be convinced that these steps must be taken immediately, that otherwise the power of the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies would be devoid of meaning, and would offer nothing to the people. Why do we wish that power should pass to the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies?

The first thing the Soviets must accomplish is the nationalisation of the land. Nationalisation is being spoken of by all the peoples. Some say it is a most Utopian measure; still, everybody comes to regard it as inevitable, because land-ownership in Russia is so complicated that there is no other solution except the removal of all boundary-lines and the making of all land the property of the state. Private ownership of land must be abolished. This is our first task, because the majority of the people are for it. To accomplish this, we need the Soviets. This measure cannot be carried out by means of the old government bureaucracy.

The second measure. We cannot stand for the 'introduction' of Socialism—that would be sheer nonsense. We must *preach* Socialism. The majority of the population in Russia consists of peasants, of petty proprietors, who cannot even conceive of Socialism. But what objections can they have to a bank's being established in each village, to enable

them to improve their husbandry? They can have nothing against such a measure. We must make propaganda in favour of these practical measures among the peasants; we must make the peasant realise that they are needed.

#### BOLSHEVISM AND SOCIAL DEMOCRACY

*This article, entitled About our Revolution, is among Lenin's latest writings. It was written at the beginning of January, 1923. Suchanov's reminiscences of the revolution of 1917 (from the fall of the Tsar to the capture of power by the Bolsheviks) which he takes as his starting-point, were written from the standpoint of a Left Socialism that rejected Kerensky but was opposed to the Bolshevik methods. In 1931, as we have already related, Suchanov as leader of the Mensheviks was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment for counter-revolutionary activities. Lenin's article makes clear the gulf that divides Bolshevism from every form of the opportunist Socialism that believes in peaceful development and parliamentary democracy — Quoted from the original Russian edition of Lenin's works, Vol XXVII*

I have just been looking through Suchanov's reminiscences of the Revolution. The book is a striking exposure of the pedantry characteristic of our petty bourgeois democrats and all the heroes of the Second International. It scarcely needs pointing out that they are arrant cowards, and the best among them resort to paltry quibbles as soon as there is any question of the least departure from the German model<sup>1</sup>. No, there is no need to speak of this characteristic of all petty bourgeois democrats; it has been sufficiently displayed in the course of the Revolution, and their slavish endeavour to ape the past is equally striking.

<sup>1</sup> The belief of the German Social Democrats in parliamentary government and democracy — W.G

They all call themselves Marxians, but their conception of Marxism is incredibly pedantic. They have never understood the fundamental feature of Marxism, namely the revolutionary dialectic; and they have entirely failed to grasp Marx's explicit statements that at a time of revolution the utmost adaptability is required. For example, in a letter written, most probably, in 1856, Marx expresses the hope that it might be possible to combine with the movement among the proletariat an agrarian rising of the German peasantry which would create a revolutionary situation. Even a statement so unambiguous as this they evade, and go all round it like a cat round hot porridge.

Their entire attitude stamps them as cowardly reformers, afraid to act independently of the bourgeoisie, let alone break with them. But at the same time they conceal their cowardice behind the most hollow phrase-making and claptrap. And even from the purely theoretical standpoint they display their complete incapacity to comprehend a sensible interpretation of Marxism. Just because they have seen capitalism and bourgeois democracy developing hitherto on a particular line in western Europe, they are unable to conceive that this line can only serve as a universal norm with certain modifications which, from the standpoint of world history, must seem insignificant.

In the first place the Revolution is bound up with the first imperialist world war. This revolution must necessarily be marked by novel characteristics or alterations of method necessitated precisely by the War, for nowhere in the world has there been a war fought under similar conditions. Up to the present, as we have seen, the bourgeoisie, even in the wealthiest countries, has been unable to restore the normal conditions of bourgeois society. But our reformers, our petty bourgeois, who pose as revolutionaries, have regarded and still regard these normal bourgeois conditions as a frontier not to be overstepped; moreover,

their conception of them is extraordinarily stereotyped and narrow. Secondly, they have no notion that the universal law of historical evolution, far from excluding particular stages of development, on the contrary determines the distinctive features whether of form or order peculiar to every stage of the historical process. It never strikes them that Russia, occupying as she does the boundary between the civilised countries and those which for the first time have been brought for good within the pale of civilisation as a result of the War—that is, all the countries of the East, the non-European countries—may, indeed must, have, in consequence, some peculiar characteristics. These obviously are included in the process of world revolution; nevertheless they render the Russian Revolution different from those which have occurred in western countries, and involve some partial novelties in the transplantation of revolution to the East.

For example, a thesis of theirs learnt by rote from the history of German Social Democracy has proved itself an empty, mechanical formula. It is the assertion that we are not yet ripe for Socialism, that we do not possess, to use the language of our learned friends, the objective economic presuppositions of Socialism. To none of them has it ever occurred to ask himself the following question: Is it impossible that a people faced with a revolutionary situation—such a situation as has arisen for the first time in the first imperialist war—is it impossible that such a people should be impelled by the sheer hopelessness of their position to plunge into a struggle which offered them some chance of conquering for themselves opportunities hitherto unknown of further progress in civilisation?

Russia has not reached the level of production at which Socialism becomes possible. This is the proposition which our heroes of the Second International, amongst them of



course Suchanov, peddle about. This truism which no one can deny they repeat in a thousand different forms, imagining that it is sufficient to condemn our revolution.

But when unique circumstances drew Russia into the imperialist world war in which all the countries of western Europe that count for anything participated; when the peculiar situation of Russia placed her on the frontier of the incipient revolution of the East, a revolution that has indeed, already begun; when we had the precise situation in which we could realise that indispensable combination of a peasant revolt with the proletarian movement which so sound a Marxian as Marx himself, writing about Prussia in 1856, regarded as a distinct possibility of the future; when the utter hopelessness of the situation had multiplied tenfold the energies of the workers and peasants and made it possible for them to take another step forward and lay the foundation of a civilisation such as exists in all the other countries of Europe—what then? Has all this changed the general line of historical evolution, altered the radical relationships between the classes on which the social structure rests, in a state thus drawn into the general current of world history?

Granted that a particular level of culture is necessary for the establishment of Socialism, though nobody can state precisely in what it consists, the question arises, why should we not begin to bring about by revolutionary action the prerequisite conditions for this level, and having laid the foundation of a government of the workers and peasants—the Soviet system—set about the task of winning over the other countries?

You will reply that to create Socialism civilisation is indispensable. No doubt, but why cannot we begin to create in our country the prerequisites of civilisation—for example, the dispossession of the landowners and Russian capitalists, so as to begin thus the movement towards

Socialism? In what books have you read that such disturbances of the normal historical order are illicit or impossible?

Napoleon wrote, '*On s'engage et puis on voit.*' Freely translated this means, 'We must first plunge sternly into the fray, and then we shall soon see.' Now in October, 1917, we entered upon a stern struggle and now for the first time have seen such details of the historical process (from the standpoint of world history they are, of course, details) as the peace of Brest-Litovsk and the New Economic Policy. At present it is already plain beyond all doubt that in fundamentals we have conquered

It never occurs to our Suchanovs (not to speak of those Social Democrats who are more to the Right than he) that revolutions cannot be made in any other way. Our European respectabilities do not so much as dream that further revolutions in the eastern countries, which have a far thicker population and are strongly contrasted with the European states in the greater variety of their social arrangements, will no doubt show them situations far more peculiar than the Russian Revolution.

To be sure a text-book setting forth Kautsky's principles was very useful in its time. But the moment has arrived to abandon the notion that such a text-book has foreseen every phase of the future historical development. It is high time that all who entertain such an idea should be denounced as blockheads

#### THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT

*In 1920 Lenin planned a monograph on the dictatorship of the proletariat, but wrote only the preliminary draft. Nevertheless this draft with its headings gives us an instructive insight into his conception of the state. A few of these headings are quoted here from the Russian edition of his works (Vol. XXV)*

*A. The dictatorship of the proletariat as a new form of the proletarian class war.*

1. The fundamental reason why the 'Socialists' do not understand the dictatorship of the proletariat is their failure to carry the notion of the class war to its logical conclusion. The dictatorship of the proletariat is the continuation of the proletarian class war in novel forms. This is the decisive point, which is not understood. The proletariat as a distinctive class continues by itself its class war.

2. The state is simply the weapon with which the proletariat wages its class war. *A special sort of bludgeon, nothing more.*

3. The forms assumed hitherto by the proletarian war cannot under its dictatorship remain what they were. Five novel tasks and forms of warfare corresponding to them:

4. (a) Suppression of the exploiters' resistance: (i) a keener edge given to the class war; (ii) the opposition assumes new forms which correspond to the final stage of capitalism (plots, sabotage, propaganda among the lower-middle class).

5. (b) Civil war, the change of the imperialist war into a civil war.

6. (c) The neutrality of the lower-middle class and in particular of the peasants to be secured.

7. (d) Exploitation of the bourgeoisie. Experts. Not only suppression of their resistance, or the compelling of their neutrality, but their employment in work, their compulsory service of the proletariat.

8. (e) Education to a new discipline: (i) the dictatorship of the proletariat and the trade union; (ii) communist model workers; (iii) the purging of the party and its purpose; (iv) rewards and payment in accordance with the work done.

*B The dictatorship of the proletariat as the overthrow of the middle-class democracy and the creation of proletarian democracy*

1 Dictatorship and democracy as universal, in Karl Kautsky's language, pure concepts The dictatorship as the negation of democracy. For whom? The abstract, petty bourgeois, democratic point of view, and Marxism (Class war.)

2 Liberty of property owners freedom for what? From what? Why? In what?

3 Equality of the property owners.<sup>1</sup>

LAW AND TERRORISM

*When a legal code for the Russian Federal Republic was compiled in 1922, Lenin devoted particular attention to the provisions for punishing attempts at counter-revolution with foreign aid. As the following letter to Kursky, the Commissar for Justice, proves, Article 57, which deals with counter-revolution, was drawn up under Lenin's supervision. He prepared several preliminary drafts for this article, the first of which is here quoted*

Propaganda or agitation or participation in forming or co-operating with organisations designed to assist that portion of the industrial bourgeoisie which does not admit the right to existence of an economic system aiming at the destruction of capitalism, and which therefore attempts its forcible overthrow, whether by foreign intervention or blockade or espionage or financing the Press or by similar means, renders the delinquent subject to the supreme penalty. Under extenuating circumstances the capital

<sup>1</sup> He means that in the bourgeois society there is no equality between the possessors of property and the propertyless —W G

penalty will be replaced by deprivation of liberty or by exile.

*To this sketch Lenin appended a letter in which he sought to justify the political terror (quoted from the 'Bolshevik,' October 31, 1930):*

May 17, 1921. Comrade Kursky, with reference to our conversation I enclose the draft of a complementary paragraph of the penal code. . . . Its fundamental purpose is clear—to make plain to all the principle (politically true and no mere maxim of a narrow jurisprudence) which determines the character and justification of terrorism, its necessity and limits. The legal trial is not intended to replace terrorism; to make such a profession would be deception of others or oneself; but to base terrorism firmly on a fundamental principle and give it a legal form, unambiguous, without dishonesty or embellishment. The law must be couched in the widest possible terms, for only the revolutionary sense of justice and the revolutionary conscience will determine its more or less comprehensive application in practice

#### A CONFESSION OF MATERIALISM

*In 1922 Lenin published in the newly founded review, Under the Marxist Flag (March number), an article in which he expounds his atheist views and the methods to be employed in their propaganda. He insists that one of the most important tasks of the new materialist review must be to attack any fashionable currents of philosophic thought of an idealist description and thus continue the materialist tradition which the Russian intelligentsia had developed. Quoted from the Russian edition, Vol. XXVII.*

We have only to recall the host of fashionable philosophies that arise in European countries, beginning with those contemporary with the discovery of wireless and ending with those which at the present day attach themselves to Einstein, to perceive the bond between the class interests and position of the bourgeoisie, with their support of all forms of religion, and the idealist character of these fashionable philosophic currents.

From what has been said it is evident that a review that is to be the organ of militant materialism must before all else be a controversial instrument that will unflinchingly expose and attack all our contemporary 'diploma'd lackeys of the sky-pilots,' whether they come forward as representatives of official science or as free-lances, calling themselves democrats and publicists

In the second place such a review must be an organ of militant atheism. In Russia, to be sure, we have officials, or at least organisations, under the patronage of the state which are in charge of this propaganda. But it is nevertheless extraordinarily feeble, conducted in a fashion completely unsatisfactory, and obviously hampered by the weight of our Russian bureaucracy as it exists at present even under the Soviets. It is therefore absolutely essential that the work of these official institutions should be supplemented, improved, and enlivened by the foundation of a review specially devoted to materialist propaganda which it will prosecute untiringly. Account must be taken of all materialist literature that appears abroad, and everything of value must be translated or at least noticed.

Long ago Engels advised the leaders of the contemporary proletariat to translate for circulation among the masses the literature composed in defence of atheism at the end of the eighteenth century. His advice, to our shame be it said, has not yet been followed. This is but another of the countless proofs that it is far easier, in a revolutionary

epoch, to seize power than to make the right use of it when it has been seized.<sup>1</sup>

Attempts have been made to justify this lukewarmness, inertia, and inefficiency by all sorts of lofty pleas: for example, that the old atheistic literature of the eighteenth century is antiquated or unscientific, in fact, naive. But nothing is more deplorable than these pseudo-scientific sophistries, which in reality serve only to conceal pedantry or even complete failure to understand Marxism. There is no doubt much that is scientific and naive in the atheistic writings of the eighteenth-century revolutionaries. But there is nothing to prevent the editors of such writings from abridging them or adding a short preface calling attention to the progress in the scientific criticism of religion, achieved since the end of the eighteenth century, and mentioning the most modern works on the subject *A Marxist could not make a greater or more fatal mistake than to believe that the masses, numbering, as they do, countless millions (particularly the manual workers and peasants) and condemned by the existing social order to darkness, ignorance and prejudices, can be liberated from their ignorance exclusively by the enlightenment of pure Marxism. These masses must be provided with every species of atheist propaganda, must be made acquainted with facts taken from the most diverse provinces of human life, must be approached by every possible avenue, in order to kindle their interest, waken them from their religious slumber, in short, arouse them by every possible approach, and in every conceivable way.*

The propaganda of the old atheists of the eighteenth century, brisk, lively, talented, acute, and openly attacking the sway of the sky-pilots, is a thousand times better adapted to wake men from the sleep of religion than the

<sup>1</sup> The complaint is out of date today. The desired translations have been made. In the Soviet Union a host of books and periodicals are published to spread atheism —W G.

dreary and dry rehashes of Marxism, hardly ever illuminated by well-chosen instances, with which our literature is swamped and which, be it frankly said, do not give a true portrait even of Marxism. All the important works of Marx and Engels have been already translated. There is absolutely no reason why the old atheism and materialism should not benefit by the improvements made by Marx and Engels. The all-important matter is—though this is too commonly forgotten by our so-called Marxian but in reality Marx-mutilating Communists—to awaken the still completely uneducated masses, so that they adopt a conscious attitude in regard to religion and interest themselves in its criticism.

On the other hand, consider the present representatives of the scientific study of religion. Almost all, belonging as they do to the educated bourgeoisie, conclude their refutations of religious prejudices with observations by which they expose themselves as idealist slaves of the bourgeoisie, diploma'd lackeys of the sky-pilots. The famous German scholar, Arthur Drews, who in his work on the Christ myth refutes religious prejudices and fairy-tales by proving that Christ never existed, concludes his book by a plea for a religion—to be sure, a renovated, purified, and improved religion—which will be capable of resisting the advance of a naturalism that is gaining ground from day to day. Such a man is an avowed and deliberate reactionary, who is openly assisting the exploiters to replace the antiquated and worm-eaten religious prejudices by new prejudices even worse and more despicable.

This does not, of course, mean that Drews should not be translated. It means that it is the duty of Communists and all logical materialists, when up to a certain point they ally themselves with the progressive section of the bourgeoisie, to expose them relentlessly, the moment they take the side



of reaction. It means that the man who is ashamed of the bond with the bourgeoisie of the eighteenth century, the period when it was a revolutionary force, is a traitor to Marxism and materialism. Literature giving information as to the conditions in the United States, where the connection between capital and religion is not so official and political as in Europe is of particular importance.<sup>1</sup> But it only brings out the more forcibly the fact that so-called contemporary democracy (to which the Mensheviks, Social Revolutionaries, and in part the Anarchists kowtow so stupidly) represents nothing but freedom to circulate whatever it is to the advantage of the bourgeoisie should be circulated. And it is precisely in the propagation of the most reactionary ideas, religion, superstition, and the defence of exploiters that their interest lies

*Lenin concludes his article by demanding an attack on scientific views that believe it possible to dispense with a philosophic—that is, for Lenin, a materialist—foundation. In this connection his conviction of the indissoluble bond between Hegel and Marxism is strikingly brought out*

We must realise that neither the natural sciences nor even a materialism which lacks solid philosophical foundations is capable of carrying on the struggle against the onslaught of bourgeois ideas and preventing the re-establishment of the bourgeois *Weltanschauung*. If this contest is to be waged victoriously, the scientist must be a materialist of our time, that is to say, a conscious adherent of the materialism represented by Marx: in other words, a dialectical materialist. Collaborators in the review 'Under the Marxist Flag', must organise, if they will achieve this object, a systematic study of Hegel's Dialectic from the materialist

<sup>1</sup> Lenin is obviously referring to the American separation between Church and State.—W.G

standpoint: that is, a study of the dialectic of which Marx made a practical application in his 'Kapital' and in his historical and political works. He applied it so successfully that at the present moment every day some new class of men awakens to life and struggle in the East—Japan, India, China. that is, those hundreds of millions who constitute the majority of the earth's population, and whose historical inertia and sleep up to the present have occasioned the conservatism and decay in the principal countries of Europe. Every day, that is to say, new people and new classes awake to life; and this supplies a new confirmation of the truth of Marxism

Obviously this study, interpretation, and propagation of the Hegelian dialectic is an extremely difficult task, and the first attempts to undertake it will inevitably involve mistakes. But the only man who never makes a mistake is the man who does nothing. We must make the Marxian interpretation of Hegel's dialectic in a materialist sense the foundation of our work. We can and should work out this dialectic in every possible direction. We must publish in the review excerpts from Hegel's important works, explain them on materialist lines, and by way of comment quote examples of Marx's use of the dialectic and instances of its operation in the political and economic sphere. Contemporary history provides these in abundance, particularly the imperialist War and the Revolution. The group of editors and collaborators of the review 'Under the Marxist Flag' should, in my opinion, constitute a species of association of materialist friends of the Hegelian dialectic. Contemporary scientists will find in Hegel's dialectic materialistically interpreted (if only we know how to look and know how to impart our knowledge to them) a host of answers to the philosophic questions with which the Revolution has confronted the natural sciences and which have seduced into the ranks

of reaction those among the intelligentsia who reverence bourgeois fashions of thought.

*Lenin's utterances on the subject of religion will be found in 'Lenin on Religion' (Martin Lawrence)*

## II. STALIN

### THE OBJECT OF THE FIVE-YEAR PLAN

*On February 5, 1931, Stalin delivered an address to the heads of the Socialised Russian industries, in which he expounded the entire industrial policy of the Government and the objects of the Five-Year Plan.*

*He began by demanding an increase of production by 45 per cent. in 1931. There must not be the same deficiency as had occurred during the previous year, when an increase of only 25 per cent. had been achieved instead of the 31 per cent. laid down. After this introduction he proceeded to unfold his programme:*

#### *The natural, economic and political presuppositions*

What guarantees do we possess that this year will not repeat last year's experience, that the plan will be completely carried out, that we shall make full use of every opening and that our undertakings will not remain to some extent merely on paper? The history of states, nations, and armies shows many instances in which all the possibilities of success and victory were present but remained unutilised, because the leaders failed to perceive them, did not know how to take advantage of them, and their armies therefore suffered defeat.

Do we possess the necessary resources to achieve the figures laid down for 1931? We do. What are they? And what is required in order to make full use of them?

In the first place, sufficient natural supplies, iron ore, coal, oil, bread, cotton. Are they ours? Yes. We possess them in greater abundance than any other nation. The

Ural region, for example, as a storehouse of natural wealth is practically unique in the world. Iron, coal, copper, oil, wheat—what is there it does not produce? We possess everything except perhaps rubber, but within one or two years we shall have a supply of rubber as well. So far as natural products are concerned, our supply is ample. Indeed, we have even more than we require.

What further is necessary?

The existence of a government which possesses the will and the means to exploit this enormous natural wealth to the advantage of the people. Do we possess such a government? Yes. No doubt the exploitation of our national resources cannot be carried out without friction arising among our workers. For example, the Soviet Government found itself obliged last year to carry on a struggle for the establishment of the second iron and coal area essential for our economic development. But the difficulty has been successfully overcome, and we shall shortly possess that area.

What further is required?

That this government should command the support of the millions of workmen and peasants. Does it possess their support? It does. There is no other government in the entire world which is supported like ours by the peasants and workers. I need not remind you of the increase in competitive production of a Socialist character, of workmen who deliberately set an example to their fellows, of the campaign on behalf of an economic scheme worked out by the masses by way of counter-check. All these facts are universally known, and clearly prove that the Soviet Government enjoys the support of the masses in their millions.

What, then, is still necessary to achieve the figures prescribed for 1931?

A system free from the incurable defects of capitalism and radically superior to capitalism. War, unemployment,

wasteful expenditure, and the poverty of the masses are the incurable defects of capitalism. From these our system is free, because the power is in our hands, in the hands of the working class; because our industrial system is systematically planned; because we receive profits calculated beforehand and distribute them equitably among the various branches of the people's economic organisation. Yes, we are free from the incurable evils of the capitalist system. In this consists our superiority over capitalism, our decisive superiority. Only consider how the capitalists deal with a crisis. They reduce wages to the lowest possible figure, also the cost of raw material and the means of subsistence. But they will not seriously reduce the cost of manufactured articles. That is to say, they want to surmount the crisis at the cost of the real consumers, at the cost of the workers, the peasants, the labourers, the cultivators who produce the raw material and the necessities of life.

The capitalists are sawing off the branch they are sitting on. The crisis, instead of being overcome, is only intensified, and factors are being assembled that will produce a further and more serious crisis. The superiority of our system lies in the fact that we have no crises of over-production, have not and will not have millions of unemployed; and there is no anarchy in our production. For our industry is systematically planned. But this is not all. We are the country in which industry is most intensive. That is to say, we can build up our industry on the foundation of the best technology, which enables us to achieve a productivity of labour hitherto unknown, an unexampled rate of production. Our weakness in the past lay in the fact that this industry rested on the foundation of an unorganised peasant agriculture—that is to say, on small-scale production. This, however, is true no longer. Tomorrow, possibly within a year, we shall be the country in which agriculture is carried on on a larger scale than

anywhere else in the world. The Sovhoses and Kolhoses—forms of large-scale cultivation—already produce a half of our crops. Thus our system, the system of the Soviet Government, affords possibilities of progress unthinkable in any bourgeois country.

What is still required if we would advance with giant strides?

The existence of a party sufficiently compact and united to focus at one point the efforts of the best representatives of the working class, and sufficiently experienced not to surrender to the difficulties which confront us, but to carry out systematically the correct revolutionary policy, based on Bolshevik principles. Do we possess a party of this kind? Yes. Is its policy the right one? Yes, for it has achieved striking successes. This is admitted not only by the friends, but by the foes of the working class.

### *The mastery of technology*

We therefore fulfil the first condition for the successful accomplishment of the plan—the objective resources. But do we also fulfil the second, are we capable of utilising these resources? In other words, are our factories, farms, mines, under the right management? Are things here all they should be? Unfortunately they are not, and as Bolsheviks we must frankly admit it.

What does the control of production involve? Even here in Russia the problem of industrial management is not always regarded from the Bolshevik standpoint. It is often believed that management consists in signing documents. This is deplorable but true. We are reminded inevitably of the Pompadours<sup>1</sup> described by Schedrin.<sup>2</sup> We recall the advice given to the young Pompadour by his wife: 'Don't rack your brains to get to know anything; don't

<sup>1</sup> Caricatured governors under the Tsars.—W. G.

<sup>2</sup> A Russian satirist.—W. G.

attempt to understand the matter in hand. Others will understand it for you. It is not your business. Your business is simply to sign documents.' To our shame we must admit that there are not a few Bolsheviks whose idea of control is to affix their signature. There is no attempt to get to the bottom of a subject, to learn its technique, to become master of the business

How is it possible that we Bolsheviks who have made three revolutions, conquered in the cruel civil war, achieved the difficult task of creating an organised industry and set the peasantry on the road to Socialism—how is it possible that when called upon to determine and direct production we capitulate to official forms?

The reason is that it is easier to sign forms than to guide production. Many industrial workers have therefore followed the line of least resistance. That is our fault also, the fault of the central organisation. It is ten years since our marching-orders were issued. Since the Communists had not yet sufficiently mastered the technique of production, and had still to learn how to manage industry, its management was given to technicians and engineers, in a word, experts. 'You Communists,' the word was given, 'must not interfere with the technical aspect of industry, but without interfering must study technical methods, must learn how to direct production, that, together with the experts loyal to our cause, you may become genuine directors of production, and captains of industry.' Such were the marching-orders. How have they been carried out? The second part of the instruction, because it was difficult, was neglected; the first was misinterpreted. Non-interference was understood as refusal to learn the technique of production. The result was a folly, a dangerous and noxious folly, and the quicker we rid ourselves of it the better.



*Stalin adduces the wrecking as an argument against the Communists' refusal to take over the control of industry and continues:*

How comes it that sabotage has assumed such large proportions. Whose fault is it? Our own. Had we regarded the question of the control of industry in a different light, had we begun sooner to master the technique of production, had we interfered oftener and more wisely in the management of industry, the wreckers would never have done the damage they have.

We must ourselves become experts, lords of industry; we must apply ourselves to technical practice and theory. The time for this is long overdue. The antiquated policy of non-interference in the technique of production must be discarded, and we must become specialists, experts, complete masters of production. The question is often asked why we have no unity of industrial control. Because it is an impossibility until we have mastered the technique of production. As long as we Bolsheviks do not possess sufficient technical, economic, and financial experts, there can be no such unity of direction. Draw up as many resolutions as you please, take all the pledges you will; until you have mastered the technology, the economics, the financial aspect of a business, be it factory or mine, order will be impossible.

It must therefore be our task to make ourselves thoroughly acquainted with technical methods, until we are ourselves masters of industry. This is the sole guarantee that our plans will be fully carried out and unity of direction secured.

This, obviously, will be no easy matter, but it must be carried out notwithstanding. Science, technical experience, expert knowledge, on these our very life depends. Today we do not possess them, but tomorrow we shall. The all-important point is to possess a passionate Bolshevik

determination to master technology, the science of production. Passionate determination can achieve anything, can overcome all obstacles.

*Russia's task*

It is sometimes asked whether we cannot slow down the pace, call a halt to the movement. No, it is impossible, comrades. We must not slacken the pace. On the contrary, we must increase it to the utmost of our powers. To slacken the pace is to lag behind. Laggards succumb, and we will not succumb. No, we will not! The history of old Russia is a long series of defeats—the penalty of lagging behind. Russia was defeated by Mongol Khans, Turkish Beys, Swedish Lords, by Polish-Lithuanian Pani, English and French Capitalists, and Japanese Barons. She owed her defeat to the backwardness of her army, her civilisation, her political, industrial and agricultural organisation. Her foes vanquished her, because they profited by it and could do it with impunity. Remember the words of the pre-revolutionary poet: 'Mother Russia, thou art poor, yet rich in superfluous wealth; thou art mighty, yet impotent.' These hostile powers took good heed of the poet's words. They smote Russia and said, 'You are rich in superfluous wealth, therefore a fit prey.' They smote and said, 'You are poor and impotent, therefore you can be smitten and robbed with impunity.' That is the law of capitalism, to strike the laggard and the weak. It is the wolf's law of capitalism. 'You are backward, and weak, therefore in the wrong, therefore justly defeated and enslaved. You are strong, therefore in the right, and we must beware of you.'

We must lag behind no longer.

In the past we had not and could not have a fatherland, but now, when we possess a proletarian government, we have at last a fatherland; and we shall defend its inde-

pendence. Do you want our Socialist fatherland defeated, its independence lost? If not, you must put an end to its backwardness as speedily as possible, and develop its industry at a truly Bolshevik pace. There is no other way, and it was for that reason that Lenin said in those October days: 'Either die or catch up with the progressive capitalist countries.'

We are some fifty or hundred years behind the progressive countries. We must make good the lost ground in ten years. We must accomplish this or be trodden underfoot.

This is a duty which we are called upon to perform towards the workers and peasants of the Soviet Union.

But we have other duties even more important and more serious. They are duties towards the proletariat of the world. They coincide with those duties of which I first spoke, but we give them precedence. The working class of the Soviet Union is a portion of the working class throughout the world. We owe our victory not only to the Russian working class but also to the support of the entire proletariat. Without that support we should have been defeated long ago. Our country is called the advance-guard of the proletariat of every country. That is true. Why does the international proletariat support us, how have we earned its support? Because we were the first to take the field against capitalism, the first to establish a proletarian state, the first to set in hand the construction of Socialism. Because we are engaged in a task whose success will transform the entire world and emancipate the working class as a whole.

What is necessary to succeed? To get rid of our backwardness, and maintain a high speed in our construction, worthy of Bolsheviks. We must make such rapid strides forward that the workers throughout the entire world, seeing us, can say: 'That is my advance-guard, my shock troops, my proletarian government, my fatherland. They

are accomplishing their work, our work. It is well! We will support them against the capitalists and kindle the flame of revolution.' Must we justify the hopes of the world's workers? Assuredly we must, if we would not incur lasting ignominy.

These are our duties. You see, they impose a Bolshevik pace of development.

I am not saying that we have done nothing for the conduct of industry during these last years. We have effected something, indeed much. We have doubled the output of our industry in comparison with the pre-war period. We have realised the greatest agricultural production in the world. But we could have accomplished still more if we had set to work when we should, to make ourselves masters of production, its technique, its financial and economic aspects.

Within ten years at most we must cover the ground still to be covered, if we are to catch up with the progressive capitalist countries. To do this we possess all the objective possibilities; we lack only the capacity to exploit them to the full. But this depends on ourselves, and only on ourselves. It is high time that we learnt how to exploit these possibilities, high time that we put an end to the lazy non-interference with production. It is high time to adopt the attitude demanded by present conditions, and to take part in everything. If you are in control of a factory, interfere in every branch of the business, take an active part in everything, don't be idle. Keep on learning. Bolsheviks must master technique. It is time that they became experts. In a period of construction technology is all-important. An industrial worker who will not learn the technique of his business, and make himself master of it, is not a serious worker.

To master technique, it is said, is a difficult task. This is untrue. There are no fortresses which Bolsheviks cannot

capture. We have already solved a host of difficult problems, have seized power, and have set the peasants of middle position on the road to Socialism. We have already accomplished the hardest part of our constructive task. There is little left to do: simply to learn technology and acquire the requisite scientific knowledge. When we have accomplished this, we shall achieve a pace at present unthinkable. And we shall accomplish it, if we genuinely desire to do so.

### III. DIFFICULTIES AND METHODS OF SOCIALIST CONSTRUCTION

#### STALIN'S PROGRAMME OF JUNE 23, 1931

*By 1931 a certain backwardness in the fulfilment of the Five-Year Plan had become evident. The production of industry had not, in fact, increased to the extent contemplated. But it would be a mistake to conclude from this retardation that the Plan has failed. It is a simple matter of tactics which, if energetic remedial measures are adopted, cannot imperil the execution of the Plan as a whole.*

*These energetic measures have been, in fact, prescribed by Stalin, in a speech delivered on June 23, 1931, and reported in the Pravda of July 5th. The programme here laid down has often been described as 'Stalin's departure from Communism.' The description is false, inasmuch as Stalin's programme is in entire harmony with Lenin's. Lenin also advocated the employment of bourgeois experts, when the political and economic situation required it. He also opposed a universal equality of payment and the corporate conduct of a business which would abolish personal management. Throughout this speech Stalin proves Lenin's faithful disciple. He begins by describing the actual situation:*

#### *The retardation of tempo*

There are departments of industry which show an increase of output of 40 to 50 per cent. by comparison with previous years. Other branches show an increase of only 20 to 30 per cent. In some it is extremely slight—some 6 to 10 per cent., or even less than that. Among these is coal-mining.

*Stalin attributes this result to the fact that a great many leaders of industry have insufficiently realised the new conditions produced by the Five-Year Plan:*

*The labour problem*

Hitherto workmen have applied spontaneously for employment in factories. This was due to the prevalence of unemployment, to changing conditions in the village, to the pressure of poverty and the fear of starvation, which drove men from the country into the towns. The peasant was ready to apply to the devil himself for a job of any kind. The situation is entirely different to-day. In the first place we have abolished unemployment; that is, we have got rid of the force which exercised so powerful a pressure on the labour market. Secondly, we have applied a radical cure to the economic changes in the villages.<sup>1</sup> We have thus got rid of the wholesale destitution which drove the peasants into the cities. . . . There is no longer an influx of peasants into the towns. Labour no longer presents itself spontaneously. We must therefore undertake an organised recruitment of labour. That can be done only in one way, by the conclusion of contracts between industrial organisations and the Kolhoses.<sup>2</sup>

*Stalin proceeds to attack the too frequent changes of hands in the factories. According to him, there are few undertakings whose employees do not change by some 30 or 40 per cent. every half year, or even every quarter. He ascribes this to the faulty system of payment.*

<sup>1</sup> Stalin is referring to the destruction of the Kulaks as a class by the collectivisation of agriculture. This put an end to the economic changes produced by the extensive impoverishment of peasants in possession of medium or small holdings.—W. G.

<sup>2</sup> In other words, the Kolhoses are to be required to place a certain number of workers at the disposition of the factories.—W. G.

A mistaken system of wages is to blame for this, an equalisation of wages supposed to be demanded by Left principles. In a host of businesses the wage-scale makes practically no difference between the skilled and unskilled labourer. The effect of this equality is that the unskilled workman has no interest in making himself skilled; he has no incentive to improve himself. He feels himself, so to speak, 'a passing guest' in the factory where he is employed. As a result of wage-equality the skilled worker goes from one factory to another in search of one which will pay him a wage proportionate to his skill. . . . Both Marx and Lenin have declared that the distinction between skilled and unskilled labour must continue even under Socialism, when class distinctions have been abolished, and can only disappear under Communism; that therefore even under Socialism payment must be measured by the work accomplished, not by the recipient's needs.

*Stalin calls for the formation of groups of skilled workers, attached permanently to particular businesses. He denies that a permanency of employment must reduce the responsibility of particular groups for machinery or tools. Care must be taken to secure by the right organisation of labour that the same hands continue in charge of the same machines.*

*He goes on to demand the formation of a technical intelligentsia taken from the working class. In carrying this out responsible positions must not be confined to members of the Communist Party, but must also be given to workers unattached to the party.*

#### *The problem of the expert*

Special consideration must be shown to these unattached comrades, and they must be entrusted with responsible posts to convince them that the party prizes all capable and gifted workers. Some of our comrades imagine that only



members of the party can be appointed to posts of authority in a factory. It surely needs no proof that a policy of this kind can only serve to make the party unpopular and prevent the unattached workers from joining. It is not our policy to make the party a closed caste.

*Besides this demand for a technical intelligentsia drawn from the proletariat, Stalin urges that more consideration should be shown to the bourgeois technical experts than has hitherto been the case. He expresses the belief that they have now abandoned all hope of foreign intervention and that a willingness to co-operate loyally with the governing proletariat is the attitude prevalent in the ranks of the old intelligentsia.*

*He finally calls for the utmost economy in the working of industry. The old sources of revenue—profits from light industry and agriculture, budgetary surpluses—are insufficient in view of the extent of the new undertakings. Every percentage of capital sunk means an outlay of 150 to 200 million roubles. If this economy is to be effected, the personal responsibility of a single director is indispensable. Therefore, these joint trusts, embracing as many as two hundred factories, must be abolished. The director of a state trust must be in a position to maintain direct contact with every factory under his control.*

#### THE MOTOR-CAR FACTORY OF NIJNI-NOVGOROD

*This factory represents one of the most ambitious undertakings under the Five-Year Plan. It is to be the largest factory in Europe, and is intended to turn out no less than 140,000 cars a year, with 20 per cent. of spare parts. The factory was to have been opened on October 1, 1931. On March 24, 1931, the leading organ of the Communist Party in the Soviet Union, the Pravda, devoted an entire sheet, of the eight large sheets in which it is produced, to criticism of the actual construction hitherto effected and the methods*

*employed. These criticisms throw light on the conditions under which new business undertakings in Russia are set up.*

*A general survey introduces the series of critical articles. It pointed out that the fittings had already been begun, but the work had come to a standstill.*

This breakdown is primarily due to defective management and to the neglect of party intervention and mass work. The party cannot grant the constructors of the factory any extension of time. Its members must, as true Bolsheviks, mobilise all their forces, liquidate all failures, finish the factory and set it working by the appointed date. Very little has been done to put it in working order. No attention has been given to preparing the hands for their future work. Schools, it is true, and schedules have been got ready, but the schools are without the minimum of equipment required for regular courses of instruction. A particularly glaring abuse is the feebleness, or more correctly the entire absence, of any attempt to keep down costs.

But how could such an attempt be made when those in charge of the factory have no idea of the cost of any piece of work required? For this intolerable abuse the financial committees and party organisations of the factory are responsible.

*Detailed criticisms follow. The opportunists who ask for an extension of the time in which the factory must be constructed are first attacked:*

The party organisations of the motor factory must overcome the powerful opposition of the opportunists who are seeking to delay its speedy construction. The technical expert, Sedov, a member of the party, actually declared: 'No demand by the Central Committee to complete the work can alter the situation. . . . The rate of construction

laid down by the plan is impossible to attain.' The party cell expelled this opportunist from its membership and, by mobilising and activating the masses, has outstripped the provisions of the plan.

*Then follow complaints of the inefficient way in which labour is organised, and suggestions by foreign workers for reduction of costs. Details quoted in this connection show that the organisation has completely broken down. The highest officials, we are informed, have called upon twenty-five engineers to place their services at the disposal of the factory within twenty days. The period has long elapsed, but not a single engineer has made his appearance.*

*All these deficiencies are publicly exposed as self-criticism. The object is to stimulate and whip up the energy of all employed on the construction of the factory. The decisive part here assigned to the party organisation is particularly noteworthy. The accounts sent to the paper by labour correspondents are concluded by a description of the housing conditions which reveal the sacrifices which the establishment of a new undertaking entails:*

The Socialist workers' town has been built between one and two miles from the factory. It is intended to house a population of from 40,000 to 50,000 inhabitants. But the factory has already produced an acute shortage of dwellings. Groups of workers and experts are constantly arriving, foreign hands are expected, but there is no place where they can live. Twelve thousand two hundred hands are housed in the existing barracks. Within the next two or three months some 35,000 to 40,000 workers will be employed on the construction. Where will they live?

The building of houses must undoubtedly be pushed forward. In the first quarter of this year housing accommodation for 1,520 persons was provided. In the second accommodation must be completed for 6,000. It must be admitted that this estimate, in itself insufficient, is not

guaranteed by the available material. The construction of the first houses was to have been finished by November 1, 1930. But thirty houses were only half finished; of eight houses of one-and-a-half to two storeys not even the shell had been completed. . . . In living-rooms there have been placed doors that were intended for the w.c.'s. The water-supply and sewerage have been badly laid out. The plans made no provision for either the water-supply or the drainage.

The houses are terribly overcrowded. House No. 1 contains 400 instead of 250 inhabitants. Houses already occupied are without w.c.'s or water, some even have no lighting. . . .

The Educational Centre: according to the plan, this should have been completed by February, but nothing has yet been done. It is now intended that it should be ready by the end of July. The School: a great many plans have been drawn up, but none finally adopted. The Commissariat for Public Education proposed to utilise the typical plans of Magnitostroi, but the local officials turned down the proposal and put forward a scheme of their own. A brigade came out from the Marxian-Leninist Pedagogic Institute of Moscow. It rejected both plans, and promises to send out one of its own; but up to the present this has not been received.

#### HOW THE TOWN OF MAGNITOGORSK IS BEING BUILT

*Magnitogorsk is a Socialist town to be built in the centre of a new industrial area on the river Ural. It is particularly well known in Germany from the fact that a German architect, May, was employed in drawing up the plans. We must not, however, conclude that his plan has been carried out. An instructive glimpse of the methods of industrial construction in the Soviet Union to-day is*

*afforded by an article by 'Ignatius' in the Komsomolskaja Pravda of March 28, 1931, which bears the illuminating headline: 'An exemption from the law. A rejected plan forced through.' The article shows the way in which differences of opinion are fought out in Soviet Russia. The opponent is simply stigmatised as a wrecker, an enemy of the General Line. At the same time, the writer points out how easily the central authorities can be misled by subordinate officials. On account of its typical character the most important portions of the article are translated, with the headlines as inserted in the original.*

For two years discussions continued as to the best manner of building the city of Magnitogorsk on the left bank of the Ural. Sixteen plans were produced, all of which proved completely impracticable. Finally the German architect, May, in accordance with the proposal of the Zekombank, completed plans for building the city on the left bank. The advocates of the left bank accepted his plans as suitable for the construction of the city on that bank. Thereupon the public opinion of the workers in the Ural area declared itself against May's plans, and more generally against the construction of the city on the left bank. The Ural Soviet accepted a project for building the city on the right bank. The brigades of model workers of the Ural Soviet in an extraordinarily short time accepted the right bank and completed plans for building the city accordingly.

On March 20, 1931, the question of the construction of Magnitogorsk was discussed at a meeting of the Sovnarkom (Council of People's Commissars). Both the plan of the architect May, and the plan proposed by the model brigades of the Ural Soviet, were considered. The Sovnarkom finally decided that in view of the fact that the investigation lately undertaken has established the entire suitability of the right bank of the Ural as the site of Magnitogorsk, the city must be built on the right bank. By this

decision the Sovnarkom rejected May's plan and adopted as the basis for laying out the city of Magnitogorsk the plan presented by the model workers' brigades of the Ural Soviet.

*The natural form of physical culture*

What, then, were the respective plans presented by the German expert May and the model brigades of the Ural Soviet? According to May's plan, the city would be placed at a distance from water (river and lake), in a depression among the mountains, and in smoke, which would be a serious annoyance to the inhabitants. Though the city would thus be situated in the mountains, some one to three miles from the factory, no communal transport service is provided for 1931. May proposed that the workers of Magnitogorsk should walk every day two to six miles to and from their work, going down to the factory and climbing up again to the town through rain, mire, and ice. In a letter addressed on February 2, 1931, to the Ural authorities, he says that he considers this a natural form of physical culture.

The workers of Magnitogorsk would have much to suffer, if the city were built on the left bank. In that case it would be necessary to construct a special railway to the town  $37\frac{1}{4}$  miles in length. This would cost 5,000,000 roubles, and use up 1,500 tons of steel. It would be further necessary to lay down 37 to 40 miles of unnecessary pipes for bringing water, and three or four sewage-farms must be constructed, instead of only one. Further, if Magnitogorsk were built on the left bank it would not be situated on the line connecting Kartala and Ufa, and the railway between Sverdlovsk and Central Asia would not pass through Magnitogorsk. And, finally, if the city had been built on the left bank it might possibly have been placed above mines, so that it might have proved necessary to demolish it entirely, like Alpajevsk.

*Solid arguments have been produced: posterity will not condemn us*

The advocates of the left-bank plan make no provision for future developments. According to them we should not lay out so large a city, but be content for the present with providing a suitable settlement for 50,000 to 60,000 inhabitants. When posterity passes judgment it will be evident that we had no vision of the future development of the city, and made no preparation for it. But the proposal to build for a population of 50,000 was, of course, due not to lack of foresight, but to the impossibility of building on the left bank a city with a population of 150,000 to 200,000.

*The rationalised capitalist plan*

We must keep in mind the judgment passed by the Experts' Commission upon May's plan. On December 5, 1930, the Commission reported: The plan presented by the architect May is absolutely indistinguishable from typical town-planning of the capitalist type. Further, a German expert, Comrade Blumenfeld, in the course of a discussion of May's plan, expressed the opinion that 'Ernst May's plan repeats fundamentally the plan of a purely capitalist construction. It is impossible to regard it as Socialist.'

When once the entire impracticability of the left-bank plan and May's in particular had been exposed, and the Council of People's Commissars had decided in favour of the right bank, discussion as to the respective merits of the right and left banks should have been at an end. The construction of a Socialist city on the right bank should have been begun, the more so in view of the fact that the time limit prescribed by the Council for the completion of the plans is rather short

*An attack follows on the paper Economic Life, which continued, in spite of everything, to support May's plan. Ironical commendations are bestowed on those Soviet papers which praised May for completing within a fortnight work expected to take two years. As a criticism of this method of working, which had also been praised in the German Press as a proof of industrial superiority, the article quotes the remark made by Comrade Tolmatchev at a meeting of the Government: 'The architect May has brought us drawings which I see every day reproduced in our Press. On one of these a sheep is depicted. It symbolises the admirers of May's work.'*

*The conclusion of the article illustrates the way in which differences of opinion on industrial matters are now settled in Soviet Russia. Opponents are simply branded as enemies of the party's general line, and as anti-Socialists. Forcible measures are demanded against them.*

*The kind of people who are defending the rejected plan*

Who are those who are still pressing for the construction of Magnitogorsk on the left bank? They are wreckers, some of whom have already been arrested. They are men whom the wreckers have left to represent their views. Take, for example, the engineer Frolov. He is, in fact, a transport engineer, but for some unknown reason he has not been mobilised for the transport service. Frolov is in charge of the construction of the Socialist city Magnitogorsk. He still continues his campaign of misrepresentation. For he upholds its construction on the left bank. His irresponsible utterances are endangering the execution of the Government's instructions. He must be called to account for this. Former anarchists have also shown themselves keen supporters of the left bank who, although members of trade unions, regard them as superfluous and contribution to Soviet organs as a waste of paper. . . .



*A list follows of the opportunists and wreckers who support the left bank. It concludes with the following sentence:*

Among these supporters of the left bank are such criminals as the head of the geodetic department of Magnitostroi, the bourgeois Sidorenko who has been condemned several times.

*Decisions of the Council of People's Commissars must be carried out*

We therefore find united in the same anti-Socialist camp wreckers, bureaucrats, opportunists, and criminals. A touching combination, to be sure! . . . The advocates of the left bank do not stick at lying to obtain a revision of the Sovnarkom's decision. They maintain that buildings on a large scale have already been erected on the left bank, and therefore that if the right bank is now chosen many houses must be demolished, involving a loss of millions. A telegram from the President of the Soviet of Magnitogorsk, despatched on March 25th, refutes these lies. As regards the construction on the left bank the situation is unchanged. Nothing has been done. We must at once transfer operations to the right bank and discontinue building the houses already begun on the left bank. There must be no further attacks on the decision of the Council of People's Commissars. . . . *This opportunist dilly-dallying, which is the sole obstacle in the way of building Magnitogorsk, is due to the influence of extraneous elements. These must be banished. A sterner fight against the opportunisms of the right—and the Socialist city of Magnitogorsk will be built.*

## IV. THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST RELIGION

### SELECTIONS FROM COMMUNIST PROGRAMMES

*In the official Programme issued by the Communist Party of Russia in March, 1919, among the demands 'Of a general political character,' we find No. 13:*

In the matter of religion the KPR is not content with the separation of Church and State, and School and Church, already decreed, that is with measures which belong to the programme of bourgeois democracy, but which, in view of the multiple ties uniting capitalism with religious propaganda, have nowhere been consistently carried out.

The KPR is convinced that only the construction of a carefully planned system, with full consciousness of its goal, and embracing the entire field of economic and industrial life, can completely extirpate the religious prejudices of the masses. The party will use every endeavour to destroy completely the bond between the exploiting classes and the organisations for religious propaganda, by conducting an anti-religious campaign organised on an extensive scale on behalf of scientific enlightenment, which will contribute to the emancipation of the working masses from religious prejudices. But any outrage to the sentiments of believers must be carefully avoided, for its only result is to strengthen religious fanaticism.

*In harmony with this is the following section of the Programme of the Communist International, a draft adopted by the fifth World Congress of the KI in 1924:*

In our struggle against bourgeois prejudices and superstitions the campaign against religion occupies a special position. It is a campaign which must be conducted with all the necessary tact and prudence, particularly among those sections of the proletariat in whose daily life religion has hitherto been firmly rooted.

The proletarian government must abolish every form of state support of the Church, must completely exclude the Church from any interference with the education organised by the State, and ruthlessly repress all counter-revolutionary activities on the part of ecclesiastical organisations or their individual agents.

#### THE EMANCIPATION OF THE MILLIONS

*Under this heading Pravda published on August 14, 1930, an article by Budny which shows how atheistic propaganda is combined with every educational activity and with the collectivisation of agriculture:*

##### *The anti-religious cultural revolution*

The adoption of the policy of liquidating the Kulaks on the basis of a complete collectivisation has provided a new starting-point for anti-religious propaganda with all its significance for the political enlightenment of the masses. The task before us is plain—patient and unremitting destruction of the possessive ideology among the masses of poor and moderately well-to-do peasants who have entered the Kolhoses, and their education as Socialists. The attack which we have delivered upon the capitalist elements has raised the question in wide circles whether it is not also necessary to replace the old beliefs by new, to substitute a Socialist for an individualist *Weltanschauung*. *We must create among the masses in the Kolhoses a new Weltanschauung wholly*

*uncontaminated by religion.* The change in the conditions of production, placed henceforward on a fundamentally free and Socialist foundation, require a radical transformation of the outlook which dominates everyday life in the villages.

A cultural revolution is taking place among the peasant population of the Soviet Union, a thorough-going change of beliefs among these hundred millions, this vast receptacle of all the petty ideologies, the soil which, in village and town alike, has nourished the sects, the 'dead' and the 'living' Church, in short, religion. The Kolhoses have firmly incorporated agricultural production into a unified and organised system of Socialist industry, free from the anarchy and crises characteristic of capitalist systems. Thus the soil has been removed in which religion of all kinds strikes root.

Collectively organised work, the new way of life, the general increase in education, the simplification of the economic and social situation of the masses effected by science and a highly developed mechanical technique—have produced the material and ideological conditions which must inevitably hasten and bring about the disappearance of religion. A characteristic proof of this is the fact that the League of the Godless during this last year—and particularly in connection with the institution of the Kolhoses—has enormously increased its membership. Before, it possessed 800,000 members; in July, 1930, 3,500,000. *It is evident that this emancipation of the masses from the stupefying influence of religion does not come about of itself even under the new conditions, but is the result of a more vigorously conducted class war. . . .*

*The Kulak* is attempting to repress, in fact to stamp out, this revolutionary determination of the masses of poor and moderately well-to-do peasants to pass from an individual economic system to a collective, followed as it is by the resolve to alter their entire mode of existence, outlook, and convictions. *The cultural backwardness inherited from centuries*

*of religion he is cleverly seeking to exploit for his own ends. Every form of propaganda or agitation of Kulaks, priests, and sectaries for God and religion is directly bound up with propaganda and agitation against the measures taken by the Soviet Government to collectivise the masses of poor and moderately well-to-do peasants, against the task that is all-important at the stage we have reached, the liquidation of the Kulaks as a class on the basis of a thorough-going collectivisation. Under these circumstances anti-religious propaganda assumes a novel and distinctive significance, demands a new content, and new methods by means of which 'the party must secure and extend the important successes already achieved in the emancipation of the masses from reactionary influences' (quoted from the resolution passed by the sixteenth Assembly of the party, as reported by Comrade Stalin). . . .*

#### *Methods of anti-religious warfare*

We must combat such exaggerations of the Left as attempts to close the churches by official action alone, and those of such methods as a competition in the removal and destruction of icons. Procedure of this kind, adopted in disobedience to the rulings of the party, by its external and revolutionary character confuses the minds of many persons. But on the other hand we are faced to-day by a more serious danger: opportunist indifference, the expectation that everything will come of itself, insufficient appreciation of the value of anti-religious propaganda, the concession of political liberty to capitalist elements which exploit the religious backwardness and ignorance of the masses. Reports from local centres give information of a lukewarm attitude of this kind on the part of a large number of organisations. To a considerable extent this inertia and failure to advance is due to an inability to adapt the anti-religious propaganda to new conditions. In the first place, such an efficacious method as simple

improvement of quality—that is to say, a high standard for the simplest educational work—is neglected. Under the new social and economic conditions which have arisen in the villages as a result of the collectivisation, well-organised lectures and evening readings of a political, agricultural, or anti-religious book, produce excellent results in implanting a new outlook among the members of the Kolhoses. They incite them to shake off the yoke of religion, and in consequence it often happens that without any external pressure they remove icons and cease to ask for the services of the priests. The foundation of some competently managed musical or choral society, the educational employment of the cinema, that living newspaper, in a village, diminishes, if it does not entirely get rid of, the participation of the young people in the choirs of church or sect, church-going, etc. We must bear in mind that it is by the employment of these simple methods (choral singing, oratory, instrumental music, professedly educational evenings in which the participants are encouraged to take an independent part, that the priests, and more particularly the leaders of the sects, maintain their influence over the masses (especially the young).

Of peculiar importance for the liquidation of religion is the transformation of the social life of every day, education in a new morality, and a new social discipline. Old relationships, founded on long-established custom and hallowed and supported by religion, are being demolished. The bonds that held them together are being broken. Religion is disappearing. Therefore the most important educational task before us is to implant new forms of living, to suppress old customs, and to substitute in their place a new mode of living, collectivist and based on comradeship.

*Anti-religious propaganda and Socialist construction*

The agricultural, technical, and economic propaganda

is usually carried on among the masses without any connection with anti-religious propaganda and the formation of new convictions. This propaganda, which provides the great mass of men with the knowledge requisite for a systematic rearrangement of their lives, in accordance with a scheme accepted by the people themselves, educates their will and gives them self-confidence. It emancipates the mind from anti-scientific religious conceptions and explanations of the phenomena of life, and often, as experience has proved, from any form of religion. And in any case, it prepares the ground for a materialist explanation of the world which is incompatible with belief in a God.

*At the present time the campaign on behalf of the large-scale agricultural unit equipped with machines in conjunction with complete collectivisation is achieving an incredible success. It must prove a factor of the first importance for anti-religious propaganda among the masses. Agronomists, veterinary surgeons, engineers, technicians, teachers, doctors, and all other experts who are now being drawn into the mass propaganda to a greater extent than formerly and are employed in training the officers of the agricultural squads must make it their aim to destroy the religious ignorance of the masses by scientific knowledge. . . .*

This anti-religious work cannot be divorced from the general work of education. Every step taken in the re-education of the masses must be bound up with their emancipation from the stultification of religion. The unitary plan of educational work must not be unitary only in the sense that it unites the activities of different organisations, but in the substance and content of its work. *All work in all branches of the educational campaign must be inspired by the principles of an anti-religious enlightenment.* The entire educational campaign must serve to organise the masses in the League of the Militant Godless. But at the same time the campaign, including the propaganda against religion, must

be wholly subordinated to the demands of the class war at this particular stage, and to the task of Socialist construction.

#### THE YOUNG ATHEISTS AND THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST EASTER

*From a report by A. Wakurova in the Antireligiosnik, a scientific and educational monthly (the organ of the Central Committee of the League of Militant Atheists of the Soviet Union), No. 3, March, 1931:*

To complete the foundation of a Socialist industrial system is before anything else the slogan of the third year of the Five-Year Plan. If we would answer the call, we must hasten the rate at which Socialist industry is growing, redouble our efforts to force forward collectivisation and raise the educational level of the worker. Lenin has taught us indissolubly to link the war against religion with the war waged by the proletariat for Socialism. During the anti-Easter campaign of this third decisively important year of the Plan (1931) all the Godless must take a most active part in securing a Bolshevik tempo of development, and in raising to the highest level the competition in Socialist achievement and the standard of model work. This year the anti-Easter campaign coincides with the second Bolshevik spring, which must play a decisive part in effecting a complete collectivisation and the total liquidation of the Kulaks as a class. Our four million Pioneers and our millions of young Godless are not waiting for some future date to set up Socialism; today they are actively engaged in laying the foundations of a Socialist economy. And in this second spring of the Kolhoses our young Godless must be among the model workers carrying out the plans for a Bolshevik sowing. . . .



But we must not be content, this Bolshevik spring, with selecting seeds. Lenin wrote: 'The generation now growing up can learn Communism only if at every step their instruction and education are combined with the unremitting war of the labouring proletariat against a society of exploiters.' The resistance of our class opponents has stiffened to meet the Socialist advance and the liquidation of the Kulaks by a complete collectivization. The children, the future builders of Socialism, do not escape their attention. The Kulaks, with their agents the priests, mullahs and rabbis, are forcing their way into the schools and kindergartens. They are doing everything in their power to stem the growing movement of Communist education.

The results of the anti-Christmas campaign have shown that the young Godless have not always met the challenge as they should. Children have often held celebrations round a Christmas tree. For example, it was reported that in the twenty-seven schools of the Frunse district of Moscow ten October children absented themselves from the anti-Christmas evening to dance round a decorated Christmas tree. But more serious news has reached us—reports of celebrations on Christmas Day. In the school called after Tolstoy fifty pupils were absent on January 7th (the Russian Christmas), and in the Armenian school 75 per cent. were absent. In some schools prayer-books, little crosses, and religious pamphlets were sold.

The solemn services of Easter, the visits of greeting to private houses, are exploited by the priests to renew the agitation against collectivisation and the Bolshevik spring. Red Easter eggs, blest Easter cakes, are the baits with which the priests capture children. The young Godless must be on the alert to expose the attacks of class opponents, and prove by concrete instances the counter-revolutionary nature of their activities. What a disgrace for any young militant atheist to be decoyed by a red Easter egg and a

sweetmeat, to forget his vocation and be caught in the enemy's nets! The sixteenth Party Assembly has called the special attention of all party organisations to the necessity of a more vigorous campaign for recruiting the ranks (that is, providing new members as a new generation grows up). The young Godless must obey these instructions, and therefore in the anti-Easter campaign he must prove to the hilt and beyond that he is playing his part in the educational revolution.

Particular attention must be given to the campaign for universal and compulsory education. The leaders of the sects are conducting a stubborn agitation to make it impossible. In the village of Sochranov members of a sectarian organisation, the Federovs, will not allow their children to learn and thus make universal education impossible. In the workers' settlement of Ishevsk, when universal education was introduced, the evangelists collected the children and terrified them by telling them they would all be forced into school, taught a little, and then conscripted for a war which would break out in the near future. By talk of this kind the sectaries sought to prevent universal education and so destroy the foundation of the educational revolution.

The ninth Assembly of the Union for Communist Youth has published the following resolution dealing with the campaign for universal education. 'We must carry on an intensive propaganda in favour of universal education . . . we must struggle for the extension of the polytechnic school, attendance at which is compulsory in the towns . . . we must provide with an organised system of instruction all members of the rising generation who at present cannot read or write or, if at all, very imperfectly.' The young Godless must struggle to get this resolution carried out. And when conducting the anti-Easter campaign, the children must not lose sight of the Catholic and Lutheran

Easters, the Jewish Passover, and the Kurban-Bairam festival. When children of other nationalities attend a school they must be instructed as to the necessity for a hundred per cent. attendance on their religious festivals.

Nor must we neglect in our anti-Easter campaign to pay the requisite attention to the defences of our country. With the watchword, 'We will answer the sky-pilots' attack on the Soviet Union by securing the power of our country, and in particular the defensive strength of the Red Army,' the young Godless must push forward the collection for their atheist campaign, for which they must also obtain their parents' support. In the campaign against Easter all scholastic organisations must take an active part, also parents, factories, and Kolhoses. To under-estimate the political importance of the campaign, to lose sight of the class character of religion, is a heresy of the opportunist Right to be energetically combated. But on the other hand, we must not follow the example of the children in the May school (Donetz Basin). They determined 'that any child who did not join the cell of the Godless League shall be expelled from the school.' Against such excesses on the Left we must also take vigorous action. Only by a determined struggle waged on both fronts can we assure the success of our anti-Easter campaign.

*This article is typical of the methods employed in the campaign against religion. Industrial and political activity is bound up a priori with the war on religion. The assertion, assumed as self-evident, that religion and scientific knowledge are incompatible, speculates on the ignorance and low educational level of the masses. The reader should also notice the appeal to the Bolshevik formulas, put forward as the sole rational explanation of life. The Five-Year Plan must be carried out, the national defence secured, and the general policy of the party maintained by attacks upon deviations to the Right or Left.*

## THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST CHRISTMAS, 1930

*The same number contains a report of the way in which the campaign against religious festivals is carried on. The result of the campaign against Christmas conducted in 1930 in twenty-nine Leningrad schools is reported. We shall quote a few passages:*

The campaign against Christmas in the schools was closely bound up with the reading of the annual reports and the canvassing for the Soviets for the Leningrad circle and sectors, with the preparations for the third decisive year of the Five-Year Plan, with strengthening the national defences, and with the campaign for the polytechnic school and for a new order of life.<sup>1</sup> The activity displayed in organising the masses produced an extensive movement and aroused the interest of the school children, particularly the groups of the young Godless, in the anti-religious campaign. A number of lectures, entertainments, and educational campaigns among the school children raised the standard of the anti-religious work.

Particularly keen interest was awakened by the conclusion of Socialist pacts between groups and the hands employed in particular factories or shops for a hundred-percent. attendance at the meetings to hear the reports and vote. In the classes for younger pupils the plan was worked through the formula: 'We will help the Soviets to conduct the election campaign.' In this way the active members of the Godless directly participated in the construction of Socialism.

In a large number of schools anti-religious resolutions were passed: for example, that models of the planetary system should be set up, a crematorium opened, the sale of

<sup>1</sup> Notice in this series of formulas the dominance of particular phrases prescribed from time to time by party resolutions.—W. G

religious ornaments of every description or objects of religious worship should cease, the felling and sale of Christmas-trees be forbidden, the ringing of bells prohibited. . . . A collection was taken for the campaign conducted by the Godless.

Evening parties arranged by the schools were for the most part held on December 24th and 25th, and January 6th and 7th (the two Christmases). For these a number of artistic representations, gymnastics, community singing, demonstrations, and tales of an artistic description were arranged. There were humorous parties, parties devoted to questions and answers. Seventy-six dramatic performances were given in the course of the anti-Christmas campaign. Among these were *Secure the re-election of the Soviets by fighting against religion; all must participate in the re-election of the Soviets; an illiterate man is a blind man; the ABC of the Godless; Galileo*; and a representation of the trial of the industrial party for counter-revolution. There was also a Gospel puppet-show.

Reports were also received of visits made to museums and exhibitions, among them the anti-religious exhibition, and the theatre of the Godless Institute. Some schools organised institutes at which children have earned 25 roubles by preparing potatoes, to spend their earnings on the loan 'The Five-Year Plan in Four Years.' The lectures were usually given by the teachers, but a few schools applied to the local council of the Godless League for a speaker.

The subjects of these lectures and addresses were such as the following: 'The League of the Godless, the shock troops in the campaign for the third decisive year in the Five-Year Plan'; 'The Election of the Soviets, a concern of the Godless League'; 'The origin of Christmas and its class character'; 'Religion and spirituality in the service of the landlords and bourgeoisie'; 'The Church, religion, and

the year 1905'<sup>1</sup>; 'The intellectual revolution and religion'; 'Why no member of a sect should be admitted into a Soviet'; 'Religion and the threat of war'; 'Who profits by the Christmas fairy-tale?'

In the factories the campaign took the form primarily of a universal Socialist competition, between the school groups and the hands engaged in various branches of work of which they were made honorary patrons, for a hundred per cent. attendance on the Christmas days, an increased output, and the fulfilment of the plan for financing industry. Shock troops of scholars and teachers addressed the workers during the midday interval, meetings and demonstrations were arranged, and evening parties held in the schools and the clubs attached to the factories, with lectures and exhibitions.

#### THE INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES OF THE GODLESS OF IVANOVO-VOSNESENSK

*This is a typical report of the international work of the Godless. The following account of the activities carried on by the Ivanovo-Vosnesensk group of the Godless League appeared in the March number of the Antireligiosnik, 1931.*

The work was begun in the middle of last September. To undertake it the local council appointed a committee of the Godless Esperantists in conjunction with representatives of the cells of the Godless League whose duty it would be to study concrete questions respecting the objects of the international work. At this session an international section of the local council of the Godless was formed which immediately set to work. Its first task was to form groups of Godless correspondents abroad to interchange letters

<sup>1</sup> The date of the first Russian revolution.

with our own Godless, who would keep them informed as to the situation of the atheist movement here. Its next task was to arrange a Socialist competition between our organisations and the Leipzig organisation. Its third, to instruct our local organisations of the Godless League on international work.

The first of these seemed the most difficult to accomplish. Although a group of Godless Esperantists was already in existence, it proved no easy task to collect a group of foreign atheist correspondents. We inserted an advertisement in *The Internationalist* asking for atheists ready to get into direct touch with our section. As a result, two correspondents wrote and gave information. One proved to be a very active young Communist and atheist. But he has only sent us one letter dealing directly with atheist propaganda. Now, however, a group of foreign correspondents attached to our section has been formed, whose members inform us of everything which concerns the general political struggle of the proletariat. We often receive letters reporting sexual misconduct on the part of the representatives of religion, but up to the present very few articles dealing with the part played by the Church in the class war.

We receive many anti-religious papers and magazines from almost every country, also many pamphlets and bills. From Germany, for example, we received almost all the electioneering bills of the party. Our closest connection is with Germany. All matter received is made use of. Letters sent by foreign atheists are translated, and a large number of copies made which are sent to the local papers, to the official organ of the Godless and the local broadcasting station.

*The writer then describes how this foreign material is employed in getting up anti-religious exhibitions on such subjects as 'Religion and War,' 'The part played by religion in the Border States, in preparing an attack on the Soviet Union,' etc.*

## THE GODLESS OF ODESSA AND LEIPZIG

*What are these Socialist competitions between the organisation of the Godless and revolutionary freethinkers abroad? As an example of these we shall quote a review of the compact concluded between the Godless group of Odessa and the Leipzig section of the Proletarian Freethinkers' League (also from the March number of the Antireligiosnik, 1931).*

*The writer begins by pointing out how the bourgeoisie in its struggle against the proletariat employs every possible weapon, and amongst others the Church, which has in every period been an instrument for oppressing the working class. What, then are the terms of the compact?*

Both parties pledge themselves to take an active part in the class war of the proletariat serving in the ranks of the Communist Party. The Russian Godless promise to work in the front line of those who are engaged in the task of Socialist construction. The second paragraph runs as follows: 'Emancipation of the workers from the religious ideas which stupefy their intelligence. We (the German Godless) pledge ourselves to withdraw as many workers as possible from church membership, and to persuade them to refuse payment of their church tax. The Odessa group of the Godless League pledges itself to raise its membership to 40,000. The Leipzig Revolutionary Freethinkers' Association pledges itself not only to increase its membership to the utmost but to take action against all the calumnious sermons and other activities directed against the Soviet Union for which the clergy of all denominations in Germany are responsible and which aim at destroying the powerful Socialist system of the first proletarian state in the world'

The third paragraph reads: 'The most thorough-going transformation possible of our way of living. The Odessa



association pledges itself to exert itself to the utmost to secure a universal refusal to celebrate religious festivals and a hundred per cent. attendance of workmen and officials at their work on such days. We pledge ourselves to bring about a thorough change in the way of living in the families of the Godless, and in particular the abolition of everything in any way connected with religion (religious ornaments, rings, religious customs, especially greetings in the name of Christ, the baking of Easter cakes, etc.). We regard as essential the complete execution of the watchword: The Godless must have a Godless family.'

Pledges follow to undertake anti-religious propaganda. For example, an anti-religious university for evening classes is to be established in Odessa, an anti-religious radio-university, two advanced training-schools for teachers and soldiers, a secondary school for women, another for young Communists, and a third for members of the Kolhoses. The seventh paragraph lays down regulations for education. In all the schools of Odessa cells of young Godless shall be instituted with which the parents are to collaborate. With the aid of these school cells of young atheists and of parents' committees the teaching staff, particularly in the branches of natural science, will carry out a scientific campaign against religion. In Leipzig a stubborn campaign will be carried on to get rid of religious education, against the Concordat already concluded (in Prussia) and that still to be concluded, and to introduce into the schools the teaching of scientific materialism.

#### ANTI-RELIGIOUS WORK AMONG WOMEN

*The anti-religious Press contains a host of articles describing methods of anti-religious propaganda for all sections of the population, the various nationalities, children, members of the Kolhoses,*

*and, above all, women. As an example, we shall quote from the February number of the Antireligiosnik a report on anti-religious work among women. Here, again, we find the combination of anti-religious propaganda with the attempt to carry out political and economic plans and raise the intellectual level of the masses. The religious man must be replaced by the economic man. He is the foe of the Soviets, a hindrance to intellectual progress and the extension of education.*

Popov's report on the anti-religious work among women in the district of Ivanovo begins by pointing out that women are particularly susceptible to religious propaganda.

For this their educational backwardness is to blame; this is itself the consequence of traditional customs, whose abolition is one of the most important tasks which the Revolution must accomplish. In one village a priest said: 'You must work through the women.' This was said at a meeting which decided to work against the Soviets.

Popov complains that an entire staff of ninety-six nuns, pious women, and so on, is at work firmly implanting religious prejudices. In this connection it has been pointed out that 83 per cent. of the illiterate are women, and therefore particularly open to religious propaganda. What methods have been employed to combat this religious stultification of the women? Of the 100,000 members of the local Godless League, 36,000 are women. The League must increase its membership in 1931 by 35 per cent., in 1932 by 40 per cent, and in 1933 by a further 60 per cent, thus attaining a membership of 834,456. Particular emphasis is laid on the extension of anti-religious teaching among women. Special training-schools and study-circles have been established for women agitators against religion, but according to Popov their number is still too small. A course of higher anti-religious studies has therefore been organised. In the anti-religious technical college of Alexan-

drovk the most important faculties are the anti-religious faculties of dialectical and historical materialism. There the theoretical study of atheism is closely combined with practice. A six months' course of instruction is followed by six months' practical work in the district. Among the forty students first received were fourteen women. Popov is therefore able to report that at the conclusion of the first period of studies in March, 1931, fourteen districts will be provided with qualified anti-religious agitators.

The anti-religious campaign is being pushed forward in the club, the Red corner,<sup>1</sup> the workshop, the dwelling. Its chief forms are lectures, readings, discussions, artistic displays, and excursions.

An important part is played by individual or group agitation in a factory or house where many families lodge together. In this way the Godless are able to discover and expose sectarians who are damaging our cause. It is a usual practice to collect a group of women in one of these dwellings. At first commonplace topics are discussed. Gradually the subject of anti-religion is introduced, and a discussion follows. Not only women workers, but housewives, are recruited for the anti-religious propaganda. The housewives of Perejaslavl, who belong to the Godless League, have sold 1,665 roubles' worth of the national loan certificates, and sewed 1,256 pieces of washable material for children's cots.

It is well known that the Kulaks and the agents of the Churches and sects are attempting to exploit our difficulties for their own ends, are, for example, spreading inflammatory reports. The Godless women take part in these conversations in the market or in shops, and expose the calumniators. A group of peasant women often gathers round a farm cart to listen to a short anti-religious talk.

<sup>1</sup> The wall, or portion of the room decorated with revolutionary placards, and pictures of Lenin and Stalin.

As the result of meetings of this kind many women begin to doubt. It is the duty of the anti-religious campaigners, by further work, to transform this doubt into convinced atheism. In the city of Ivanovo and in Navoloki there are atheist shops and a Godless brigade attached to a dispensary. A shop of this kind, besides attempting to serve its customers well and get rid of queues, disseminates anti-religious literature. The interest of a woman customer is involuntarily aroused by anti-religious placards; a book is recommended to her and its contents explained, so that the customer often goes away with an anti-religious book as well as the goods she came to purchase. The dispensary has not only to secure a high quality in the articles it provides, but also to conduct anti-religious propaganda among its clients. . . .

In this work among women the centre which combats illiteracy should occupy a most important position. In Jaroslavl every centre possesses three cells and two active workers. It carries on the following activities: anti-religious discussions, excursions, recruiting members for the cells of the Godless League. By carrying on a systematic anti-religious campaign in the centres for combating illiteracy and in the schools intended for those who read and write very imperfectly, we must persuade the women to sever voluntarily and completely all connection with religious bodies.

In the schools of Ivanovo mutual pledges are concluded between mother and child to do the best work and learn most and to achieve a hundred per cent. attendance at the classes on religious festivals.

*Work in the villages is still very unsatisfactory. Up to the present very poor results have been obtained. There follows an instructive instance of the connection between the collectivisation of agriculture and atheist propaganda:*

When it became known that the collective farm called 'The Godless' was working successfully, and that the poor peasant woman Anufrieva, whose bread before the collectivisation only lasted till January at most, was receiving, in the Kolhos, all the produce till the new sowing, and 120 roubles in addition, the sympathies of the women were secured for the Kolhos. Applications began for admission to the Kolhos and the cells of the Godless League. The members of the Kolhos report that among them only one very old woman is still a believer.

#### ANTI-RELIGIOUS WORK AMONG THE PRIMITIVE MASSES

*A few extracts from Chlebzevitch's book, The Proletarian Reader and the Anti-Religious Campaign—Suggestions for the Literature, Forms and Methods of Anti-religious Propaganda and Lecturing (Moscow-Leningrad, 1928), will show how the introduction of the technical achievements of civilisation among the primitive masses is exploited for anti-religious propaganda:*

*The effect of aircraft in promoting atheism, and the employment of agitational aviation*

In a certain village a church festival was being kept. A service was being held in the village church. About 8 o'clock an aeroplane flew over the village. Owing to bad weather it came down in a valley near the village. The people were at prayer in the church. Suddenly the powerful sound of the engine was heard from the sky overpowering the singing. The aeroplane was flying straight towards us over the fields. The worshippers broke off their 'Lord have mercy.' Without an instant's delay the young lads followed the children, and the girls the lads, the men followed the girls, the old women panted and puffed after the men,

and last of all came the priest's wife with the whole choir, until the priest was left alone in church. 'If I die this moment, I've seen it,' an aged woman cried out as she gazed up in wonder at the aeroplane. So the aeroplane stopped the service.

*Chemistry compelled an icon of Christ to agitate for entrance into the Godless League*

At an anti-religious lecture given at Jaroslavl an interesting experiment was made. . . .

According to Comrade Ivanov's report an old icon of Christ was shown to the audience. The lecturer said with a smile: 'You will not, of course, pray to this icon. We will simply ask it: "Christ, are you for or against the Godless League?"'. Suddenly a 'miracle' was wrought before the eyes of the entire audience. The old icon began to shine like a newly minted coin, and around the crown writing appeared in all the colours of the rainbow: 'Join the Godless League without delay' and 'Long live the miracle-worker Emeljan.'<sup>1</sup> For a moment the audience gazed spellbound, then broke into loud laughter. A little later the face of Christ puckered up and tears began to flow from the eyes. 'Christ is weeping.' When the laughter quieted down, the lecturer explained the 'miracle.' The icon had been prepared by treatment in the laboratory of the chemical works. Little tubes and vessels full of chemicals had been inserted in it. An artificial fat had been employed for the tears. The sky-pilots' miracles were exposed, for chemistry had compelled the icon of Christ to agitate on behalf of the Godless League! We find it very useful during the lecture to call the attention of the audience to suitable literature both verbally and by advertisements affixed to the wall.

<sup>1</sup> Jaroslavsky, the President of the Godless League —W. G

## V. THE LAW OF MARRIAGE

*The Bolshevik law of marriage at present in force throughout the entire federation, the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic, which came into operation in 1927, is distinguished by its official recognition of so-called 'actual' or unregistered marriage. That the step was not taken without considerable misgiving is evident from the collection of articles and documentary material dealing with matrimonial and family law published in 1926 by the then Commissar of Justice, Kursky. In addition to articles by Bolshevik jurists, the collection contains the shorthand reports of two meetings of the Russian Central Executive Committee, at which the new code dealing with marriage and the family was discussed. The debates prove that not only non-party and uncultured peasants, but Bolshevik statesmen like Kalinov, and jurists like Krassikov, felt the greatest repugnance to the new marriage law.*

*A number of Bolshevik jurists asked for a definition of marriage to avoid universal anarchy. Their demands were rejected by the supporters of the new law on the plea that not even bourgeois codes possessed an exact definition of marriage. For they had rejected the old metaphysical and theological conception of marriage, and therefore their clinging to the fiction of indissoluble marriage while making divorce easier was purely an economic convenience, an expression of social hypocrisy. Brandenburgsky said that in his opinion the aim of the bourgeois codes is to avoid compelling men to support their mistresses. If they were logical, they would reject the ecclesiastical doctrine that sexual relations outside marriage are unlawful. If, as the conditions of the present day demand, freedom of divorce is recognised, then actual marriage, what is called concubinage, must produce the same effects as marriage recognised by the state, concluded in a legal form, and registered by a Government official. He continued as follows:*

Life has compelled the Soviet legislators to take a step forward. For of all that once distinguished marriage from concubinage nothing of any essential importance remains—in fact, only the fact of a formal conclusion, or as we express it, registration of marriage.

#### ACTUAL MARRIAGE

*This attitude rests on the belief that marriage is a purely physiological and economic matter. Brandenburgsky continued:*

Marriage is no mystery, no union of the human and divine, as was formerly taught. Marriage is a phenomenon of social life which corresponds with the laws of nature, and is dependent upon the conditions of production. Comrade Goichbarg was perfectly correct when he called marriage 'an institution which owes its origin and development to particular economic conditions. When the latter alter the former alters with them, and their disappearance must involve the disappearance of marriage.'

*Why then is official registration still necessary? Brandenburgsky replied:*

Registration does not create the fact of matrimonial cohabitation and its legal results. We categorically refuse to regard registration as a condition apart from which there can be no marriage. Registration is certainly necessary, but only as the registration of an existing fact. For us marriage is primarily a fact, and from that fact, not from a juridical act, particular legal consequences can and must follow. . . . It is not seriously credible that registration makes the cohabitation of a man and woman essentially different from their unregistered cohabitation.



Registration is useful as a convenient method of determining the nature of the actual relations in question.<sup>1</sup> But an otherwise identical relationship, which has not been invested with the certainty of formal registration, does not therefore cease to be a living reality. . . . The entire question must be reduced to this: Are there in practice sufficient cases of unregistered matrimonial cohabitation to warrant the legislator in treating them as a mass phenomenon of which he must take special account in order to secure that the actual code arising out of the Revolution is reflected and sufficiently regulated by the superstructure of the written code? In real life many instances of actual matrimonial cohabitation are found, not only among the ruling industrial proletariat of the cities, but even in the villages. They existed prior to the Revolution; they have increased enormously since, and will still further increase in future, whatever the code may decree in the matter. Even if we decided to make registration obligatory, it would not mean that we should copy the example of bourgeois legislation and refuse legal recognition to an unregistered marriage. The practice of the Soviet courts would undoubtedly refuse to take cognisance of such a law. There can be no doubt that the future lies with what we term actual marriage.

But why speak of the future? There is no doubt that we shall reach this point,<sup>2</sup> but even at present the form must not take the place of the substance. It is ludicrous to suggest that a formality can strengthen marriage and make it last longer. Not a single bourgeois scholar has ventured to make that assertion, or could make it. In view of the

<sup>1</sup> The fact of an unregistered matrimonial cohabitation would have to be proved, if a dispute arose about it. And we must remember in this connection that the defenders of the draft code against Bolshevik critics admit that a casual sex relation, for example with a prostitute, cannot be regarded as actual marriage; in other words, actual marriage requires a certain duration and publicity.—W. G.

<sup>2</sup> When actual marriage will predominate.—W. G.

fact that seven years ago we abolished the distinction between legitimate and illegitimate children, it may well be asked whether the time has not already arrived to abolish the distinction between lawful and unlawful marriage. A marriage is a marriage, wherever there is an actual cohabitation of a man and woman and not merely a casual sex relation. All the legal consequences must therefore follow from actual marital relations, even if they are not registered.

#### THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE MATRIMONIAL CODES OF 1918 AND 1927

*The code of 1927, therefore, no longer requires the official registration of cohabitation for the state to recognise the legal effects of marriage, as was the case under the code of 1918. The reason for this difference was explained by Kursky, the Commissar for Justice, in the document explaining the code it was proposed to adopt.*

In 1918 the Church was separated from the State. Therefore the object of the first revolutionary legislation dealing with marriage was necessarily to abolish the ecclesiastical marriage which, under the old code, was the sole source of material rights and duties for the parties. Today the struggle against ecclesiastical marriage, if not yet superfluous, is by no means such an urgent necessity.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, the main object in view in drawing up this draft has not been to lay down a formal definition of the family and marriage, but rather to defend the weaker subject of matrimonial and domestic legislation.

<sup>1</sup> That is to say, the people no longer possess the old attitude towards ecclesiastical marriage, as Kursky pointed out in a defence of the proposed legislation, in reply to those Bolshevik opponents who argued that the abolition of compulsory registration would lead to a revival of marriages in church.—W. G.

According to the proposed legislation the official registration of marriage will be simply a technical expedient for determining a particular fact. It will make it easier to prove the existence of a marriage, if it should be necessary to claim maintenance or other rights arising out of marriage. Therefore the maxim hitherto accepted that only the bourgeois secular marriage . . . creates rights and obligations which must be regarded as the self-affirmation of the new bourgeois marriage against the old ecclesiastical marriage has become superfluous, if only for the reason that it gave countenance to the notion that the legal rights were produced not by the relationship, but by the fulfilment of a formality, namely registration by a particular official. In the draft code registration of marriage has been adopted with the purpose of making it easier to safeguard the rights and interests, personal and material, of the parties and the children. In accordance with this principle a number of clauses provide that those living in actual marriage shall possess the same rights as registered husbands and wives, with the obvious exception that the former, if a dispute arises, must prove their married condition in a court of law or before some government official, whereas in the case of the latter, the registered couples, the marriage is certified from the outset.

#### THE AIM OF THE LEGISLATION

*The object of this legislation, according to Brandenburgsky, is the emancipation of sexual relationships from religious and ecclesiastical influences and traditions. After speaking of the adoption of civil marriage by the bourgeois states, he points out that the civil marriage is nothing more than a legal formality.*

The legislation governing marriage and the family in

France and other bourgeois countries is not yet free from the practical influence of the Church and clergy. The religious content of marriage is retained—as is proved by the conditions prescribed for its conclusion, the position of the wife as an object of property, the grounds which render marriage invalid, or give the right to a divorce,<sup>1</sup> and in the formalities with which marriage is surrounded. . . .

The fundamental purpose of the rules which regulate marriage must be to free the woman from personal servitude. If this is not achieved, the question where and how the marriage is registered is of minor importance. The fundamental significance of the Code of 1918 consists in its breach with ecclesiastical matrimony, but the step acquires a special significance from the fact that the prescriptions of the code further the wife's emancipation.

It has been found necessary to review the fundamental provisions of this code in order to bring them into complete harmony with the new morality which has arisen among the workers and peasants of our country, so that the code may assist its development, by wholly emancipating marital relations from the prejudices, effects, and irrational conditions of bourgeois 'respectability,' to assist the complete liberation of the wife from her husband's authority, and by degrees to abolish every trace of her economic dependence upon him. The right position occupied by marriage and the family in the economic structure of the Soviet system is one of the most essential material conditions which have actually made it possible for women to play so active a part in the social life of our country. Our legislation on marriage and the family must treat the family as a community of workers, and cannot therefore tolerate the least economic inequality between husband and wife.

<sup>1</sup> The obligation of fidelity is unknown to the Bolshevik marriage code, and divorce—the cancellation of the entry in the register—is not dependent on any misconduct.—W. G.

## UNNATURAL SEX RELATIONS NOT CRIMINAL

*The relations between the sexes, indeed sexual life as a whole, are regarded from a purely utilitarian standpoint. Therefore such unnatural relations as, for example, incest are no longer punishable by law. That is not to say that relations of this kind are looked upon with favour. They are, on the contrary, regarded as conduct contrary to the normal order. A striking illustration of this attitude is contained in a discourse delivered to the women workers' section of the Central Committee by Krylenko, for many years public prosecutor. The discourse, like Brandenburgsky's, has been published in the collection of official documents:*

As you are aware, incest was formerly punished as a crime. In our Union it is still a penal offence in Azerbaitan, and also, I believe, in Armenia and in one of the eastern republics. But the legislation of the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic does not admit this principle, for it is impossible to prove from the standpoint of social hygiene the harmfulness of marriage between half-brothers and half-sisters. Nor is this all. At Samara an application was refused for the registration of a wedding between father and daughter, although the woman had already two children by her father. The question was raised whether the father or daughter should be prosecuted. The supreme court before which the question was brought refused to regard the union as criminal. Our law does not punish sexual relationships of this kind. This, of course, does not imply that we regard such unions as normal. But in no instance can they be made the subject of criminal proceedings. To our enquiry the Commissariat for Public Health replied that it was difficult to give a definite answer, but that in any case a marriage between consanguine relatives was more harmful from the standpoint of social hygiene

than this case of a union between father and daughter. This was one of the grounds which decided us not to prosecute.

It is not, I repeat, because such forms of marriage are to be encouraged that I refer to this case. Even if they were perfectly normal from the standpoint of the Commissariat of Public Health, there are moral objections to relations of this kind.<sup>1</sup> There are moral demands so intimately bound up with our sensibilities that acts of this nature are incompatible with them, even if we cannot determine whether they are otherwise beneficial or harmful. Our law therefore opposes the entire weight of its authority to marriages of this kind. We lay down the principle that such marriages cannot be registered.<sup>2</sup> But at the same time we will not treat them as criminal. It would be ridiculous to suppose that because a few isolated cases exist today, tomorrow everybody will be living in this way, because they can no longer be legally punished. And the few who do live in this way will not be improved by imprisonment.

<sup>1</sup> This appeal to ethics is in fundamental contradiction with the Bolshevik view of marriage, which regards it as purely physiological and economic sexual union. Krylenko's uncertainty is betrayed by the following remarks.—W. G.

<sup>2</sup> Are unions between a father and daughter, then, actual marriage, even if incapable of registration?—W. G.







## EXPLANATION OF BOLSHEVIK TERMS

*Bednjak.* The poor peasants, representative of the village pauperism (Bednota), whom the Bolshevik Party supports in the class struggle against the wealthy peasants (Kulaks).

*Cheka.* Russian abbreviation (Tscheka) of the title 'Tschreswytschainaja komissija' (Extraordinary commission) appointed immediately after the October revolution to combat counter-revolution, sabotage, and speculation. It was the organ of the political terror; is called at present the OGPU

*General Line or Policy.* The official plan laid down by the majority of the party, and therefore at present Stalin's policy. The general line is the standard by which the Bolsheviks judge all occurrences.

*Kolhos.* Abbreviation for 'Kollektiwnoe chossestwo'—the large-scale agricultural unit constituted under the Five-Year Plan. The Kolhoses are amalgamations of small farms in a common collective farm, centrally managed and organised. The peasants who have not entered the Kolhoses are called 'Edinolitschniki' (Individual Peasants).

*Komsomol.* Abbreviation for 'Komunistitscheskij sojus molodeschi' (Union of Communist Youth).

*Kulak.* The rich peasant treated as the enemy of the poor peasant. The institution of the Kolhoses is intended by the Soviet Government to reduce the influence of the wealthy peasants, and to destroy the Kulaks as a class.

*The Left Opposition.* The *bloc* of Stalin's opponents led by Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev, and Radek, which charged him with making preparations for Bonapartism and a Thermidor,\* capitulation to the Kulaks, bureaucracy, etc. This *bloc* existed in 1926-27, and came to an end with the expulsion of its leaders from the party. The majority of its members submitted. Only Trotsky and his followers

\*During the French Revolution the revolutionary Jacobin dictatorship was overthrown in the month of Thermidor

remained outside the general line. For that reason the Trotsky group is often treated as representative of the Opposition.

The first Left Opposition within the party was formed in 1918. It attacked Lenin's opportunist foreign and economic policy, particularly his capitulation to imperialist Germany by the peace of Brest-Litovsk. Among its leaders at that time was Bucharin, who today belongs to the Right Opposition.

*Monolitnostj.* The accepted symbol of the compact union of the proletarian Bolshevik Party, which is depicted as a monolith. And the proletariat is sometimes termed by the Bolsheviks Hegemon, as possessor of the Hegemony or leadership in the revolution.

*NEP.* The new economic policy substituted by Lenin in 1921 for the War-Communism. Private trading was once more made legal, and concessions granted to the peasants. The Nep-bourgeois is the merchant and trader who made an official reappearance with NEP. The Five-Year Plan has indeed severely restricted the concessions granted by NEP, but since private trading is still permitted, it is impossible to regard it as completely revoked. NEP are the initial letters of 'Novaja ekonomitscheskaja politika' (New economic policy).

*Ogpu (Gpu).* The title given, ever since the introduction of the new economic policy, to the tribunal which is the organ of the political terror, suppresses all attempts at opposition to the Government, and deals with counter-revolutionary sabotage and the like. It has power to pass and execute sentences of imprisonment or capital punishment without a public trial. OGPU are the initial letters of the title, 'Objedinnennoje gosudarstvennoe politischeskoe upravlenie' (united state political administration).

*Permanent Revolution.* The theory borrowed from Parvus-Helphand by Trotsky, and put forward by him on the occasion of the first Russian Revolution (1905-6) as the rôle of the proletariat in the backward Russian Empire. The permanent revolution is the combination of bourgeois and Socialist revolution. Under the leadership of the proletariat the social and economic progress hitherto neglected will be made up. Trotsky's opponents criticise the theory on the ground that it under estimates the rôle

of the peasantry and is therefore in conflict with Lenin's fundamental thesis, the necessity of a union between the proletariat and the poor and moderately well-to-do peasants. Before 1917 Lenin often combated the theory of permanent revolution.

*Pioneers.* Members of the Communist Association for Children. Bolshevik children are sometimes also called October children, 'Oktjabriaty.'

*The Right Opposition.* The name given to a group among the party leaders in disagreement with Stalin's policy, which in 1929-30 was active under the leadership of Rykov and Bucharin. Tomsy, the leader of the trade unions, also belonged to it. It advocates a more cautious rate of industrialisation, milder treatment of the Kulaks, and more regard for the actual conditions of life. Stalin succeeded in overcoming it, and relegated its leaders to unimportant positions. Bucharin was expelled from the Third International, and Rykov forced to resign the presidency of the Council of People's Commissars of the Union and be content with the position of a Commissar of Posts. The leaders of the Right Opposition escaped expulsion from the party by public declarations of regret.

The so-called *Right Left Bloc*, led by Syrzov, the president of the Council of People's Commissars of the Russian Federal Republic, and Lominadse, a disciple of Trotsky, came into evidence from time to time during 1930 by protests against bureaucracy, falsifications of statistics, inadequate leadership, etc. Like the Right Opposition, it was disposed of by the formula that it was simply an expression of cowardice and inspired by disbelief in the proletariat and Socialism.

*Sdelschina* Payment by piece-work. Lenin had already demanded this. But tendencies to equalise all wages contrived to make themselves felt. The tendency was particularly operative in the Kolhoses, where it has been found necessary to insist constantly on the necessity of paying the workers both in money and in kind, according to the quantity and quality of the work done, and not simply to distribute the produce according to the size of the families. In June 1931 Stalin insisted on *Sdelschina* in industry. It is an error to see in this a departure from the

principle that has hitherto dominated Bolshevik economic policy.

*Serednjak.* The peasants of moderate means whose collaboration in the collectivisation of agriculture is regarded by the Bolsheviks as indispensable. It is very difficult to draw a hard and fast line between the Serednjak and the Kulak, and room is left for considerable elasticity.

*Specialist-Expert.* The middle-class expert and representative of the technical intelligentsia, whose collaboration is utilised by the Bolsheviks. The policy to be adopted towards them is one of the chief problems which the Soviet Union has to solve. The Government actually fluctuates between mistrust of the experts who, it is said, are inclined to support counter-revolutionary plots and foreign intervention, and a more favourable treatment, since they are indispensable for the work of industrial construction. The first year of the Five-Year Plan was marked by trials of experts. We have only to recall the trial of Ramsin in 1930 and of the Mensheviks at the beginning of 1931. But on June 23rd, 1931, Stalin made a pronouncement that the time had gone by when the experts were inclined to sabotage, and he must therefore once more emphasise their indispensability. That is to say, there is not a sufficient supply of proletarian and Bolshevik experts. Attacks on experts by suspicious party papers, workers, etc., is known as *spezeedsvo* (expert-eating).

*SSSR* Abbreviation for 'Sojus sovetskich socialisticheskich respublik,' Union of Socialist Soviet Republics, often abbreviated to USSR.

*Udarniki.* Model workers organised in shock squadrons, whose work is to set an example to others. They are intended to show that in the Soviet Union work is regarded as the supreme value. The Udarniki have developed from the Subbotniki, who in answer to Lenin's call undertook voluntary labour on holidays.

*War-Communism.* The economic policy of the Soviet Government during the civil war, when it attempted to organise the economic life of the country under the central control of the state.

*Worker's Opposition.* A movement which took shape in 1920-21 within the Communist Party. It demanded that the proletarian dictatorship should take another form. Its ad-

herents wished authority to be transferred from the ruling Bolshevik Party to the proletariat as a whole and its organs, such as the trade unions and co-operative societies. Lenin succeeded in defeating this opposition, in which, among others, Schliapnikov and Madame Kollontai played a leading part.

## NOTES

### PART I. THE HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL BACKGROUND

<sup>1</sup> The origin of the autocracy is one of the most controversial problems of Russian history. A host of Russian historians and publicists have written books to refute the belief that the autocracy, the despotic rule of the Tsar, had its foundation in the Russian natural character. Particularly important in this connection is the work of a historian who died before the war, Pavlov-Silvansky ('Feodalism w drewnei Russi,' Moscow, 1923). He attempted to prove that feudalism existed in medieval Russia, and that therefore the constitutional development of Russia did not differ essentially from that of the rest of Europe.

Pavlov-Silvansky works out the following scheme of Russian history. First period, to 1169: fundamental institution of the village and agricultural community; tribal self-government. Second period, to 1565: (the terrorism of Tsar Ivan the Terrible directed against the great nobles, the Bojars); supremacy of the Bojars, the great landowners; a feudal system develops. Third period, sixteenth to nineteenth centuries: monarchy a system of fixed classes. This period is subdivided into two closely connected sections, the period of the Moscow monarchy based on a caste system of hereditary officials, and the absolutist monarchy of Petersburg, from Peter the Great onwards). The reign of Peter is no longer the important line of demarcation. The Europeanising of Russia does not constitute a distinctive epoch. Peter's reforms are presented as simply the culmination of autocracy. The historian's personal standpoint is betrayed by his forecast of an epoch in which the order of fixed classes bound up with autocracy will break up and a new free bourgeois order will establish itself. Pavlov-Silvansky does not deal with such questions as the ideological background of the autocracy, and the effect of the Tartar domination.

The Marxian historian N. Roschkov (1906) insists that the fact to which autocracy owed its existence was the advent and development of a monetary system of economics with the extensive market it opened up. Another Marxist, Pokrovsky, rejects, as we should expect, all political and geographical explanations that set out, for example, from the colonial character of the Russian empire, its situation in the steppes, its military organisation, etc. For him, as for Roschkov, autocracy is bound up with the substitution of a monetary system for a system of barter. Like the autocracy in Western Europe from the fourteenth to the seventeenth centuries, the Russian autocracy is an instrument of capitalist accumulation. The Marxian hypothesis, as Pokrovsky points out, presupposes the existence of feudalism in medieval Russia. The notion that before Peter the Great Russia had no connection with Europe is contrary to the historical facts; Platonov ('Moskwa i sapad,' Berlin, 1926) accepts S. Soloviev's verdict about Peter the Great: 'The necessity for striking out a new path was admitted—the people were prepared for it—they were only waiting for a leader, and the leader appeared.'

N.B.—The term 'autocrat' (*samoderchez*) was officially used for the first time in 1625.

Of works in the English language dealing with Russian history the following may be quoted: Sir Bernard Pares, 'History of Russia' (1926); Skrine, 'Expansion of Russia, 1815-1900' (Cambridge Historical Series, 1913); Sir Donald Mackenzie Wallace, 'Russia' (1912); Masaryk, 'The Spirit of Russia' (1915); R. Beazley, N. Forbes, and G. A. Birkett, 'Russia from the Varangians to the Bolsheviks' (1918); Miliukoff, 'Russia Today and Tomorrow' (N.Y., 1922).

<sup>2</sup> In spite of all the valuable collections of material and monographs, there exists no comprehensive account of the Russian intelligentsia written from the standpoint of the history of ideas and satisfactory from the sociological aspect. But see Masaryk, 'Russian Historical and Religious Philosophy,' 2 vols., London, 1913.

For an understanding of the intelligentsia the works of Herzen (above all his 'Reminiscences') and Dostoevsky (particularly 'The Possessed') are indispensable. The Marxists deny the thesis of the Social-Revolutionaries that

the intelligentsia played an independent part as leaders and agitators in the revolutionary movements. Nevertheless the Bolsheviks regard their revolution as the heir and fulfilment of all the movements organised by the revolutionary intelligentsia.

<sup>3</sup> Herzen may be considered the originator of the point of view which regards the Russian village community (*Obschina*) as a foundation of Socialism. Its representatives—formerly the so-called Narodniki, at present the Social Revolutionaries—believe that the existence of the *Obschina* makes possible ‘an economic and social development of Russia which can dispense with the capitalism which in the west has placed power in the hands of the petty bourgeois-philistine’ See Herzen’s typical letter on Russia and Socialism written to Michelet in 1851. The latter expresses the belief in a special mission of the Russians (Slavs) which is distinctive of Agrarian Socialism. The *Obschina* is represented as the salvation of the people from all external compulsion. The fact that the Russian people live outside Europe is regarded as, from this point of view, a blessing. For contact between Russia and European civilisation would have destroyed the *Obschina*. In Russia the peasant is just as much the man of the future as the workman in France.

The Conservative Slavophiles also sang the praises of the *Obschina*. The radical difference between the standpoint of the Agrarian Socialists and the Marxists consists in their divergent estimate of the institution. The Marxists regard it as an obsolete economic institution doomed to destruction.

<sup>4</sup> For reference to the industrial development of Russia during the period immediately preceding the Great War, see Margaret S. Miller, ‘The Economic Development of Russia, 1905–14, London, 1926. In his great history of the *Zemstvos* (*‘Istorija Semstwa,’* Petersburg, 1909) Veselovsky points out the all-important fact that their leadership was in the hands of the nobility with estates of moderate size. In the struggle between the *Zemstvos* and the Government the opposition of local interests to the centralised bureaucracy played a decisive part.

<sup>5</sup> Krassin in his *Memoirs* relates some interesting facts about the financing of the Bolshevik Party by members of



the Russian well-to-do classes. Morosov, a member of the great family of transport magnates, left in his will considerable sums to the Bolshevik Party.

<sup>6</sup> In his most instructive work on the nature and effects of the emancipation of the serfs in 1861 ('Otscherki agrarnoi ewoljucii Rossi', Leningrad, 1926) Liachenko gives statistics which prove that in fertile districts the peasants actually received less land than they had formerly cultivated. On the contrary, in the regions without black earth, they increased their holdings of land. This striking distribution worked out to the landowners' advantage. The peasants in the fertile areas had to be induced to work for the landlord; in the unfertile areas they had to purchase from him land of little agricultural value by the emancipation payments. These payments and the taxes imposed on the peasantry were so high that they were obliged to sell corn needed for their own consumption.

<sup>7</sup> Estimates of the superior productivity of the land in possession of the landlords vary within their wide limits. Pollock quotes an estimate which places it at as high a figure as 38 per cent.

<sup>8</sup> See the quotations from Lenin's 'What is to be done?'

<sup>9</sup> Lenin regarded the contrast between the concentration of industry and the backward political and agrarian organisation as the decisive factor of the revolution. His formula is as follows: 'The contrast which affords the most profound explanation of the Russian revolution is this: A thoroughly primitive system of agriculture, a village untouched by civilisation--a highly advanced industry and financial capitalism.' The industrial areas consisted of a few centres, for example Petersburg and the Donetz basin. Industry was largely dependent on state subsidies and tariffs. It was only after 1906 that it came into immediate contact with the needs of the interior market.

The kustarniki were peasant craftsmen, not to be compared with the industrial workers. Their existence was due to the poverty of the Russian village, which did not possess the money to purchase the dear products of the cities. On the other hand, the kustarniki succeeded in making their produce suitable for export. The instructive statistics given by Pollock show that the production of the

so-called rural small industry amounted to 20 per cent. of the total production.

<sup>10</sup> The figures reproduced in the text are only intended to give a rough idea of Stolypin's reform. Litvinov explains at length Lenin's attitude to it. As a Marxist he was opposed to the village community, the *Obschina*, and therefore applauded the negative aspect of Stolypin's reform, which he regarded as paving the way for the creation of a proletarian Russia. It had at last severed the tie between the industrial proletariat and the village; moreover it created an agricultural proletariat which must ultimately come into conflict with the wealthy peasants favoured by Stolypin. Further, the reform had enormously extended the market for Russian goods. Since, however, in spite of this progress Russian industry could not keep pace with the steadily increasing demand, importation on a large scale had to be resorted to willy-nilly. And that in turn endangered industry, since Russia, as primarily a country exporting agricultural produce, was dependent upon an active trade balance for the stability of her currency and the payment of her foreign debts.

The threat to the balance of trade constituted by closings of the Dardanelles, which sensibly affected the Russian export of grain, made a policy of foreign annexation popular in industrial circles. This policy of annexation is not therefore intelligible apart from the peculiar economic situation of Russia. Following Lenin, Litvinov has thus stated the alternative which has determined Russian history in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Either new conquests must increase the market open to Russian produce, or internal reforms must extend the capacity of the home market. The loss of the Crimean War was followed by the emancipation of the serfs, the loss of the Japanese War by Stolypin's reform. The latter, however, could not remove the conflict between modern industry and a primitive political and social arrangement. Hence a further inclination to undertake foreign adventures.

This Bolshevik reconstruction does not, of course, include all the reasons which motivated the Russian policy of foreign expansion. It leaves altogether out of sight the traditional factors, the independent weight of political motives, etc.

And if it is to be complete the relations between Russia and foreign capital must also be taken into account. It has been brought forward here only as a criticism of the belief that, if the War had not intervened, Stolypin's reform would have reduced the internal difficulties of the old régime to a minimum.

<sup>11</sup> The Narodniki were typical Agrarian Socialists, convinced believers in a distinctively Russian industrial development based on the *Obschina*, the *Artel*, the Russian labour guild and village industry (*kustarnitschestvo*). They rejected industrialisation. Their heirs, the Social-Revolutionaries, are of the same opinion as the Marxists in industrial questions, but continue to believe in a peculiarly Russian development of agriculture.

## PART II. THE BOLSHEVIKS SEIZE AND ESTABLISH POLITICAL AUTHORITY IN RUSSIA

<sup>1</sup> Of the numerous memoirs dealing with the Provisional Government the most noteworthy is Suchanov's 'Sapiski o rewolucii' ('Notes on the Revolution') Berlin, 1922-23, 7 vols. The sympathies of the author, who is a Left Socialist, do not matter. The value of his book lies in the often reluctant description of the social psychology of the Provisional Government. Trotsky's book, in so far as it deals with the revolution of 1917, is not nearly so lucid as Suchanov's.

<sup>2</sup> The Cadets constituted the leading bourgeois party. The Social Revolutionaries were a disunited mass extending from the right wing, which inclined to anti-Semitism, to groups whose views were more or less anarchist. The Socialists were divided into two main sections, the *Oboronzes*, in favour of continuing the war unconditionally (among these was Plechanov, who led a little group of his own distinguished by its extreme views) and the *Internationalists*, who adopted the platform of the Socialist Conference at Zimmerwald and therefore advocated a democratic peace without annexations. But the *Internationalists* were also disunited. They comprised men who desired a coalition with the bourgeoisie and Left Socialists, mostly grouped around the old *Menshevik*

leader Martov. An influential organ of these Left Socialists was Gorky's paper 'Nowaja Schisn,' on which Suchanov collaborated. Suchanov's 'Reminiscences' threw an instructive light on the prevalent chaos of conflicting cross-currents, the disputes as to the nature of revolution, and the coalition Governments. Though there was no elective parliament, all the defects of parliamentarianism were in evidence. Neither the supporters of the Provisional Government nor the different sections of the Soviets realised that their tactical skirmishing became increasingly a mere accompaniment of developments which appeared to be taking place in virtue of an objective necessity—the economic crisis and the growth of anarchy.

<sup>3</sup> Of interest is Suchanov's testimony that these journals occasionally appeared under the Socialist banner.

<sup>4</sup> The decisive part played by Lenin is also evident in the reminiscences of the Bolshevik naval officer Raskolnikov ('Kronstadt i Piter w 1917 godu,' Moscow, 1925): 'For the strategy of our party Lenin's arrival was like the crossing of the Rubicon. . . It cannot be denied that before his advent considerable confusion reigned in the party councils. There was no firm line of policy consistently followed. To the majority of the party the seizure of government seemed a remote ideal and was not usually regarded as the immediate task before ~~us~~.' The party was patently disunited. There was no 'leader with sufficient personal weight to weld it into a unity. In Lenin the party found that leader'

<sup>5</sup> The Mensheviks emphasised the importance of the Soviets as a link between the party and the proletariat, the Bolsheviks their importance as organs of the revolutionary government. And they also invested them with the task of arming the proletariat.

<sup>6</sup> If we can trust Suchanov, Stalin, in July, would seem to have advocated an attempt by the Bolsheviks to seize power, whereas Lenin hung back. The Bolsheviks denied that the mass demonstrations they organised at Petersburg were intended to be employed for a political revolution.

<sup>7</sup> These Meschrayonzes, intellectuals without support among the masses, could only obtain any real political influence by joining the Bolshevik Party. Had Lenin been a short-sighted pedant, he would never have admitted them. For he had been engaged in embittered controversy

with many of them, for example, with Trotsky and with Lunatcharsky, whose attempts to construct a proletarian religion and present Socialism as the new religion of mankind he had sternly repudiated. We must, however, bear in mind that in 1917 Lenin was to a certain extent in opposition to the so-called old Bolsheviks, who followed him only with considerable hesitation. Today the Meschrayonzes have been either expelled from the party like Trotsky, or like Lunatcharsky relegated to unimportant positions.

<sup>8</sup> The attitude of the Bolsheviks to the Constituent National Assembly was ambiguous. Their demand for its speedy summons was simply a weapon to win popular support in the struggle with the Provisional Government. But simultaneously Lenin was developing his conception of the Soviet State. 'All power to the Soviets' became a second watchword in the fight against the Provisional Government. If the Bolsheviks did not adopt an attitude of open hostility towards the Constituent National Assembly, it was because its convocation was regarded as a self-evident revolutionary demand. For in 1917 those sections of Russian Socialism which, as Akimov relates, had declared that even if defeated at the polls Socialism must be established, had been thrust into the background. Plechanov from time to time had been a spokesman of this attitude.

It is, however, important to bear in mind that Lenin cannot be regarded as a Syndicalist who rejected parliamentarianism and all parliamentary work *in toto*. Before the War he had combated the Otsovist section within the Bolshevik Party, who demanded the recall of the Bolshevik deputies in the Duma. But he considered parliamentary government not as the embodiment of democracy, but as a bourgeois system : could there be genuine equality between exploiters and exploited, the propertied and the propertyless ? His party principles alone forbade him to stand in the same relationship towards parliamentarianism as the Mensheviks, whose attitude was determined by the example of the German Social Democrats. His determination to seize political power and his Marxian faith alike made it impossible for him to be content with the position of leader of a debating party under a system of bourgeois

parliamentarianism. He rejected the democratic argument for parliaments by claiming to expose the bourgeois character of parliamentary democracy. To him a parliament was simply a means to an end, the field for an agitation, an opportunity to win supporters and expose the intrinsic contradictions of the existing system.

<sup>9</sup> The Left Social Revolutionaries, who were led by Madame Spiridonova and with whom the poet Alexander Blok was closely linked, viewed the Russian revolution as simply an expression of the elemental instincts of the people. They were idealists with no understanding of Lenin's political strategy. Many of them joined the Bolshevik Party later, only like Bessedovsky, Councillor to the Soviet Embassy in Paris, to leave it afterwards.

<sup>10</sup> This point of view is clearly seen in their attitude towards the National Assembly, whose speedy election the Bolsheviks had demanded from the hesitating Provisional Government—only to dissolve it contemptuously when it met, as an institution the time for which had long since gone by. But we must not fail to observe that in his Theses of April 1917 Lenin already demanded the establishment of a Soviet republic. For that reason Kaganovitch, a party official in close contact with Stalin, in his monograph on the autonomy of the Soviets (*'Mestnoe sowetskoe samoupravlenie,'* Moscow, 1923) is able to refute the assertion that the Bolsheviks did not oppose the National Assembly until the election had gone against them.

<sup>11</sup> As Jaroslavsky points out in his history of the Communist Party in the Soviet Union, although the majority of the party assembly did not accept Lenin's formulation of the initial paragraphs of the party constitution, in which his conception of the party found clear expression, this was of little importance, in view of the fact that he secured a majority at the election of the central committee. This enabled him and his followers to lay the foundations of a party of their own. The third party assembly was purely Bolshevik. All later attempts to effect a union between the Mensheviks and the Bolsheviks achieved no lasting success. In all questions of organisation Trotsky was a decided opponent of Lenin, whose defence of revolutionary Marxism against the so-called economism he had supported as a publicist. The controversies arising from this attitude, which more-

over became extremely embittered, were later utilised by Stalin in his struggle against Trotsky.

<sup>12</sup> With regard to the Bolshevik attitude towards the laws governing the Tsarist régime, see the famous decree of 24th November, 1917, which abolished all the old law courts and all the other judicial organisations of the Russian Empire. The decree pointed out that the laws of the fallen government should be obeyed only so far as they were not abolished by the Revolution and did not conflict with the revolutionary conception of justice. But as early as 1918 all appeals to pre-revolutionary laws were forbidden.

<sup>13</sup> Not only did the so-called Left Communists under the leadership of Bucharin and Radek attack the conclusion of the annexationist peace with imperialist Germany; even Trotsky hoped by his formula 'Neither War nor Peace' to gain the necessary time until the outbreak of the German revolution. Lenin, on the contrary, did not believe in the immediacy of revolution in Germany. In Thesis 15 he pointed out that the majority of the peasants serving in the Russian army had pronounced in favour of peace on any terms, and in Thesis 17 that to undertake a revolutionary war would lead only to the overthrow of the Russian Socialist Government. Thesis 20 is couched in the following terms: 'By concluding a separate peace we free ourselves to the utmost extent possible at the moment from both the hostile imperialist groups. We make use of their hostility and war, which render united action against us difficult. By this utilisation we secure a certain time of freedom in which to continue and secure the Socialist revolution. The reorganisation of Russia on the basis of the proletarian dictatorship and the nationalisation of the banks and large-scale industry, with a system of barter between the urban manufacturer and a consumers' association of small peasants in the villages, is surely an economic possibility, if we are assured of a few months' peaceful work. A reorganisation of this kind will render Socialism invincible in Russia and in the entire world, and will at the same time lay a firm economic foundation for a powerful and vast army of workers and peasants.'

When in the article 'Brest' of the great Bolshevik

Encyclopædia Lenin's attitude is treated as an example of what Bolshevik foreign policy should be during the so-called period of transition, in which the proletarian state is placed in the midst of a capitalist world, Thesis 20 is particularly in view. Obviously, to grasp its political significance, we must discount Lenin's mistaken estimate of the so-called difficulties of tempo. As this Thesis proves, he believed that the new state would be speedily organised, and a new economic system quickly established. The important point is his perception that it was all-important to gain time and make Russia completely independent both politically and economically. For that end the internal conflicts of imperialist and capitalist opponents must be exploited. Nevertheless this policy of peaceful construction is a preparation for the outbreak of revolution. The growth of Socialism in any country will further that revolution. Premature adventures, such as a war in 1918 would have been, could but damage the cause of world revolution.

Lenin's attitude in the struggle about the peace of Brest-Litovsk strengthened his authority in the party. From this period dates his attack upon a Left Communism whose daring and Utopian schemes appeared to him to represent only a defective sense of reality and a petty bourgeois outlook masquerading as revolutionary.

<sup>14</sup> Lenin was never weary of insisting that the Bolsheviks, in distinction from the Anarchists, use the state as a means for setting up a new social order. This new order will indeed render the state superfluous. The functions fulfilled by the state will become progressively less, until finally they are exhausted by the organisation and control of the economic system. It is from the standpoint of these principles that we must interpret those Bolshevik utterances which see in the officials in charge of the economic plan and the National Economic Council the supremely important institutions which must be increasingly elaborated.

<sup>15</sup> Carl Schmitt, who has made the Fascist conception of the totalitarian state familiar in Germany, regards as its fundamental characteristic the disappearance of the nineteenth-century distinction between state and society. In this connection the observation of the Bolshevik jurist



Magerovsky is illuminating. Speaking of the Bolshevik State, he remarks: 'We have transformed the economic machinery formerly in private hands into a machine operated by the state' No doubt since the nature of the Bolshevik totalitarian state is wholly determined by economic considerations, it is intended to assume finally the shape of a totalitarian society whose economic functions will render any political machinery superfluous. The actual development, however, takes the form of steadily increasing encroachments and extensions of the state machinery. And since the Bolshevik totalitarian state is based on a particular historical and philosophic creed, it cannot, like the Fascist, leave particular spheres of life—for example, religion—outside its orbit, undetermined by its authority. Its totalitarian claims are also expressed by the fact that it seeks by degrees to make religion superfluous, like every form of human life not moulded by its dogmas.

<sup>10</sup> In a monograph on the Russian franchise ('Sowetskoe isbiratel'noe pravo,' Leningrad, 1920) Brodovitch shows how the Communist Party welds into a unity every species of social activity. The party organisations are comparable to a gigantic lever which sets in motion the countless masses of the proletariat. They constitute the fundamental nucleus of all the organs of society and the state. He points out with truth that the franchise of the Soviets is not to be compared with the democratic parliamentary franchise, since there is only one party in existence. He also calls attention to the census of workers and the privileged position of the industrial proletariat. Certainly in determining the qualification required for enrolment as one of the enfranchised workers a certain elasticity is left in the internal politics of the Soviet Union. During a period of retreat even Kulaks, for example, may be registered as workers

<sup>17</sup> It is remarkable that, as Djablo has pointed out, among the federal states only the Ukraine troubles about the careful observance of the federal constitution. Of thirty-three complaints of violations of the constitution made in the years 1925-26 no fewer than twenty-seven were from the Ukraine.

<sup>18</sup> See Lenin's letter to the Commissar for Justice, Kursky, printed on page 301. This question of terrorism

led to the polemic against Kautsky conducted by Lenin and Trotsky.

<sup>19</sup> The alteration of nomenclature from Cheka to OGPU has involved no essential changes. The regulation of the political terror continues to be a mere matter of expediency.

<sup>20</sup> In what follows we shall make use of the penal code of 1922. The existing code of 1926, though revoking various concessions to NEP, is in all essentials identical with the code of 1922. On the principles of Soviet penal law Krylenko has published a characteristic essay, in which, appealing to the principles laid down in 1917, he states that the fundamental aim of the code is to protect the interests of the ruling class in the proletarian state against actions which directly undermine the order established by the proletariat for the period of transition. The Liberal doctrine that a man may be punished only for offences actually committed is rejected. He also rejects the distinction between the 'settlement' of a case in the courts and outside the courts—that is to say, by the OGPU. And he strongly emphasises the necessity for repression as a deterrent. Hence the distinction I have drawn between the regular courts and the OGPU does not correspond with the Bolshevik conception.

<sup>21</sup> Quoted from Steinberg, 'Gewalt und Terror in der Revolution' (Berlin, 1931), pp. 53, seq. Steinberg was for a short time People's Commissar of Justice as representative of the Left Social Revolutionaries.

<sup>22</sup> Giduljanov, in his annotated edition of the Soviet Code, quotes the following pronouncement by Kursky, the Commissar for Justice: 'The time will come when we shall place registered and actual marriage in every respect on the same footing, or completely abolish the former. Registration will serve as documentary proof of the regular cohabitation of a man and woman, so long as such proof will be necessary.'

Civil marriage was introduced on December 18, 1917, divorce on December 19th. Lenin's views on matrimonial questions are clearly explained in a speech he delivered to the first All-Russian Congress of Women Workers on November 19, 1918. He expresses his satisfaction with a freedom of divorce which had got rid of divorce actions, and of the abolition of all legal difference between the

legitimate and illegitimate child. He sees in the Bolshevik legislation on marriage the recognition of the woman's rights. In the villages, he continues, marriage in church is still prevalent owing to the influence of the priests. This must be combated, but at the same time they must proceed warily in attacking religious prejudices. Those who wage this war by outraging religious sentiment are doing great damage. The true weapon to be employed is enlightenment.

<sup>23</sup> There exists no account of the Bolshevik attitude to the population question, which goes back to first principles. The Bolsheviks regard abortion as the expression of an unjust arrangement of society. In the new Socialist society the surplus of food and goods will render it unnecessary. If at present abortion is being made increasingly difficult, this is due not to moral considerations, but to reasons of hygiene.

<sup>24</sup> See Kursky's address to the Sbornik in which he attacks the Utopian dreamers who desire the state to take over immediately the bringing up of children, and thus abolish all private rights of marriage or family. Practical reasons, in Kursky's opinion, make it impossible to give legal embodiment to an ideal of this kind during the period of transition. But even he contemplates a future social development in which the state will take over the care of children and youths. Lately, indeed, voices have been raised in the Bolshevik camp which appeal to natural and psychological laws, and advocate the bringing up of children by their mother, thus dismissing as impracticable the ideal of bringing up children without a family in public institutions.

<sup>25</sup> In 1925 Jaroslavsky wrote a book dealing with the various methods to be employed in the struggle against religion ('*Na antireligiosnom fronte*,' Moscow, 1925). Even under Stalin Jaroslavsky has remained in charge of the official anti-religious propaganda. Among the 'scientific' opponents of religion differences of opinion are frequent as to the right arguments to employ. Representatives of the General Line criticise the so-called 'myth' school, which is the vogue at present—the school which attempts to explain religion and Christianity (in this following Drews) as the ascription of historical existence to stellar myths, thus denying the historicity of Christ—as too remote

from the social realities of the present and neglecting to expose the so-called social roots of religion and its class character. The anti-religious literature is enormous, ranging from bulky tomes 'disproving' the existence of God and Christ to popular pamphlets which give directions for anti-religious propaganda among particular social and national sections of the population. In a work of anti-religious propaganda written by Gali Ibragimov for circulation among Mohammedans religion is declared to be opposed to hygiene. Such Mohammedan practices as circumcision and ceremonial ablutions with sand are adduced in proof. The anti-religious literature seeks to show that economic and industrial progress, education and the growth of science on the one hand and religion on the other are mutually exclusive, that religion has been refuted by science, that it is simply a tool to support the exploitation of the masses and so forth. These arguments are repeated with a wearisome monotony. Examples will be found on pp. 334 *sq.* There are also special anti-religious journals. In addition to the 'Besboschnik' (Godless), intended for popular circulation, we may mention the two organs of the central Council of the Godless, self-styled scientific, the 'Antireligiosnik' and 'Woinstwuiuschij Ateism.' These publications contain accounts of the anti-religious propaganda and reviews of anti-religious literature. The 'Antireligiosnik' is specially concerned with questions of organisation.

At first the sects were to a certain extent favoured by the Bolsheviks on account of their opposition to the state Church. Today, however, since they have managed to extend their influence, particular attention is devoted to their repression.

<sup>26</sup> See Jaroslavsky, *op. cit.* In this challenge to refute the contention that holy water differs in no way from ordinary water, we read: 'Not only are we prepared to prove that the mortality and diseases among baptised children are no less than among the unbaptised. We further maintain that where ignorant priests baptise, where the font is not kept clean, and the priest himself has an insufficient regard for personal cleanliness, the font is actually a source of disease and infection.' Later on the writer argues that the contention made by ecclesiastics that science and faith

are perfectly compatible is false. 'We shall prove the contrary by appeal to experience.'

### PART III. THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL POLICY OF BOLSHEVISM

<sup>1</sup> See Eckardt, 'Russland' (Leipzig, 1930). We must, however, bear in mind that Eckardt's statement is to be understood only in a very special sense. We obviously cannot say that the present system in Russia approaches the modern capitalist system, based as it is on the private large-scale undertaking. The adoption of modern capitalist methods is combined with the attempt to dispense with the private contractor. His functions are to be taken over by institutions for the systematic control of industry, a particular political group of the Communist Party, etc.

<sup>2</sup> We must also remember that Lenin regarded it as the task of the Bolshevik revolution to complete in the briefest possible time the bourgeois revolution, and to free Russia from the last links with feudalism.

<sup>3</sup> The idea of workers' control is treated today as Utopian even by such an enthusiastic supporter of the war-communism as Krizman. Nevertheless it continues to find Bolshevik defenders. Lenin regarded it as an instrument of education, the beginning of the transformation of industry from below.

<sup>4</sup> See the celebrated speeches by Lenin (The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government), and Trotsky (Work, Discipline, and Order will save the Socialist Soviet Republic). Bolshevik writers insist today that from the outset Lenin contemplated an economic policy of the type of the later NEP. He had been prepared to co-operate with capitalist trusts while maintaining the political dictatorship of the proletariat. This, however, proved impracticable, since the political repression of the bourgeoisie and the technical intelligentsia was too strong to make it possible for them to place their services freely at the disposal of the new government, as he had hoped. In fact, Lenin, after all, under-estimated the necessity of reconstructing the edifice of the state and society from top to bottom.

<sup>5</sup> Like the associations, the trade unions serve as links between the party and the non-party masses. It was for

that reason that Lenin rejected Trotsky's proposal to make them organs of government. The control of industrial and economic policy belongs not to the trade unions but to the party. Their function is only to represent the interests of the workers.

<sup>6</sup> This scheme was drawn up on January 7-10, 1918, but he very shortly abandoned it. He attempted to set the industrial and economic machine once more in motion with the aid of a bourgeoisie and its specialists working under the control of the proletariat, an attempt frustrated by the impossibility of retaining the bourgeoisie in their businesses under the prevalent conditions and the consequent intensification of their political resistance (organisation of the civil wars). The Left Communists clung to the original radical plans, refusing to learn, like Lenin, from the concrete political and social situation. The existence of these radical projects proves that the question whether Lenin expected to introduce Socialism within a short period, or was prepared to postpone socialisation to a distant future does not admit of a simple answer.

<sup>7</sup> Lenin had already declared in favour of wages fixed by agreement, etc. The popular belief that Bolshevism stands for equality of payment is completely false. Payment in accordance with the work done (*sdelnaja plata*, called today *sdelschina*), and a system of premiums was actually demanded by the trade-union congress as early as 1919. Nevertheless for political reasons there has been a recurrent tendency to raise the wages of the manual workers to a high level as compared with the payment of engineers and technical experts.

<sup>8</sup> Dobb, for example, champions the Bolshevik assertion that the socialisation was decreed in order to forestall German attacks.

<sup>9</sup> At present the contention is popular in Bolshevik circles that NEP represents the inevitable route to Socialism. To critics of the NEP policy the reply is made that it has been precisely during this period that the part played by private capitalism in the entire economic system has diminished. The economic and industrial spheres under state control have, it is claimed, advanced not only absolutely but relatively. To prove that the War-Communism was purely a strategical and political arrangement, appeal

is made to utterances of Lenin during the NEP period. On the other hand, it is always insisted that certain measures adopted during the War-Communism must not be revoked as mere temporary expedients. If this contention were true, the introduction of NEP would not have caused such serious debate in the party.

<sup>10</sup> See Lenin's monograph, composed in 1917, 'The Threatening Catastrophe and How to Arrest It,' in which he expounds his economic programme: nationalisation of the banks and joint stock companies, abolition of trade secrets, compulsory syndicalisation, compulsory erection of consumers' associations (even in Germany the system of bread-tickets was evaded by the ruling classes!).

<sup>11</sup> The best introduction to the study of War-Communism is once more the collected works of Lenin, containing his articles, pamphlets, speeches and books. All works dealing with the present state of industry and economic life in Russia or giving a general sketch of its development naturally contain at least some observations on the War-Communism. Schirmunsky gives interesting details as to the position at the close of the experiment. During the War-Communism far more than 50 per cent. of the trade in manufactured articles was carried on by private capital. The amount of manufactured articles supplied to the peasants amounted to 13 per cent. of the figure for 1912. In 1920 the total output of the factories had sunk to 24 per cent. of the pre-war figure, agricultural produce to 84 per cent.

<sup>12</sup> Larin, in his 'Private Capital in USSR,' ('Tschastnyi kapital w SSSR,' Moscow, 1927), a volume which illustrates the inner structure of the new economic policy, distinguishes three periods in NEP. 1921-23, revival of private capital; 1924-26, success in raising output to its old level; after 1927, advance of the state with its systematic state-controlled industry, etc. We would call particular attention to Larin's description of the various methods by which the private trader obtained the necessary capital for his business. All these methods are illegal, but their employment was inevitable, since the capital successfully rescued from the period of War-Communism was very small. Men in private business posed as agents of state undertakings, interposed as middlemen in the business conducted by

these state businesses, traded with advances, etc. We should also notice the organisation of bogus associations, since profit could only be made by a business conducted with private capital. In this connection various forms of domestic industry came into existence, a proof that the output of the factories was insufficient to meet the demand or was too dear.

The fundamental problem to be solved by the new economic policy was the so-called alliance (*smytschka*) between the proletariat, represented by the Communist Party, and the peasants. And in accordance with Communist doctrine this alliance was not to be allowed to operate in favour of the wealthy peasants. The output of the state factories was used to supply the peasants. An excessive disparity of prices between the products of industry and agriculture threatened the nationalised industries, and made it difficult to pay for the produce which the peasants were obliged to sell. The Government therefore attempted to destroy the power of private capital even in trade by such measures as its policy of taxation, and special privileges granted to consumers' associations. On the other hand, everything possible had to be done to prevent the growth of a class of independent and financially powerful peasants, who otherwise would have controlled the entire economic machine by their sales and purchases. The attacks upon private capital and the Kulak class were thus the necessary result of the entire system of NEP, and had inevitably to begin as soon as industry had been to a certain extent rehabilitated and the so-called period of restoration concluded. A different policy would have made industry dependent upon agriculture and would thus have led to a fundamental change in the basis of government. The struggle within the party turned on such points as the definition of a Kulak, or the extent of the concessions to be made to private trade. For the theory of *smytschka* also made possible a policy of consideration for the peasants' interests.

The hope of a direct collaboration with foreign capital by the grant of concessions has not been fulfilled. The concessions have played a very inconsiderable part in the economic system.

<sup>13</sup> The name 'Smenovechovy' has been coined after a



collection of essays entitled 'Smena Vech,' 'the change of signposts' (Prague, 1921). A collection of essays published in 1909, called 'Vechi,' advocated a change of policy by the Russian intelligentsia. In the 'Smena Vech' the change was to take the form of recognising Bolshevism as a national government

Ustrialov, in his most important work 'Pod snakom rewoliucii' (Harbin, 1925), represents NEP as an abandonment of Communism in order to save the Soviets. The reader is warned not to identify Communism and Bolshevism. The author argues that the civil war had produced a national Communism, and that the existing system of government must be gradually transformed, if it is not to disappear altogether. In other words, Ustrialov hoped that NEP represented a final transformation of Bolshevism, and marked the beginning of a development in the direction of Thermidor.

In the Bolshevik Party discussions these expectations of Ustrialov were adduced by the representatives of the Left (Trotsky, and Zinoviev in his report to the fourteenth Party Assembly, 1925) as an argument against all who favoured an understanding with the peasants, i.e. the Kulaks.

<sup>14</sup> The Kolhoses may be divided into three classes in accordance with the degree of collectivisation. the Artel, the Association, the Commune (collective housing is to be the ultimate goal). The advances of collectivisation have produced a crisis in the labour market. Hitherto the market of industrial labour had been fed by the influx from the peasantry. That influx has now ceased, as Stalin pointed out in a speech delivered on July 23, 1931, which made no little stir. There can be no doubt that during the initial period at least the Kolhoses have alleviated the so-called village pauperism. The villager now enjoys a certain minimum subsistence which, in consequence of the minute size of the holdings and the lack of tools, he did not possess before. To secure the necessary labour Stalin proposed an organised recruitment from the Kolhoses. As the Kolhoses conclude contracts (*kontraktacya*) for the supply of agricultural produce, they must conclude similar agreements for the supply of labour.

The collectivisation of agriculture is therefore intended

to get rid of the constant menace of a breach between the nationalised industry and the peasantry. We must remember that it has involved a very considerable extension of the bureaucratic machinery, particularly in view of the fact that the payment of workers on a Kolhos is not to be equal but to be measured by the amount produced. What a host of officials would be needed, for example, to execute the order to distribute workmen's passports in all the Kolhoses!

<sup>15</sup> Even in his speech of June 23, 1931, in which he advocates a more extensive employment of bourgeois experts, Stalin calls for the formation of a special technical intelligentsia from the ranks of the proletariat. In this connection we should observe that the Communist Party claims to represent the entire proletariat, therefore also the workers who do not belong to the party. In theory, at least, no opposition is to be allowed to develop between the party and the active elements of the proletariat.

<sup>16</sup> Elgers: 'In the Soviet Union the school has now become a place of atheist education.' Also Panfilov: 'The Soviet school teaches that there is no God'; in 'The Educational Five-Year Plan' ('Kulturnye pjatiletki,' Moscow, 1930). Panfilov's book is a criticism of the defective centralisation of education in the Soviet Union. He advises the institution of a central body of officials for the entire Union to control education and cultural work generally. The wealth of material in his work brings out most instructively how the technical and economic conception of education determines the Bolshevik educational policy. The great object is to provide the requisite engineers and make it possible to adopt the industrial methods of Western Europe. Even in 1926 49.2 per cent. of the population of the Union was illiterate. Panfilov advocates the bringing up of children by the state before school age so as to free women for labour.

<sup>17</sup> As early as the ninth Party Assembly the resolution was formally adopted that the organisation of the workers in the interest of the proletarian majority in no way renders compulsion superfluous. 'Compulsion plays and will play for a lengthy period of future history a very important part.' The entire organisation of the Soviets combines compulsion with activity. In the name of the active masses

particular demands are put forward and the performance of particular tasks required. It is impossible to oppose these without incurring the danger of being branded as an enemy of the régime or of the workers' interests, and having to face the attack of a Press controlled by the Bolshevik Party and its organs. The offspring of this union of compulsion and freedom is the characteristic Soviet bureaucracy, which continues to make use of a peculiar phraseology, often anti-bureaucratic in its implications. If collectivisation is required, the official collectivises and reports an enthusiastic influx of poor peasants into the Kolhoses. If collectivisation is out of favour, he is at once against it.

<sup>18</sup> Lenin's famous saying that Russia at the present day is a Soviet state disfigured by bureaucracy, is in reality the most severe criticism possible of the Bolshevik propaganda before their advent to power, directed as it was against the bureaucracy. The various Communist Oppositions reproach the party with being governed by the bureaucracy, and the party bureaucracy with being no longer the organ of a class, the proletariat, but a bureaucratic power which oscillates to and fro between the different classes.

<sup>19</sup> An inconsistent attitude towards the experts has been a feature of the Soviet government from the outset. Trotsky was obliged to defend himself against Communists who opposed his employment of Tsarist officers to train the Red Army. The bourgeois expert lies always under the suspicion of attempting to wreck the policy of the class dictatorship. Occasional opposition to the persecution of experts, for example, the attack on those party members who drove the Moscow engineer Oldenberger to suicide, fails to clear the oppressive atmosphere. The danger is always present that the expert's decision, if it differs for practical reasons from the views of Communist colleagues, may be denounced as an act of political treason. At the present moment, as a result of Stalin's speech of July 23, 1931, a period of suspicion has been succeeded by a new period of trust. The Socialist edifice, it is said, is now so secure that the technical intelligentsia, hitherto of wavering allegiance, is serving it loyally.

<sup>20</sup> This demand, however, may be withdrawn into the background, as at present, if economic difficulties arise

<sup>21</sup> At the present moment the famous geologist Lasarev is a prisoner, and no one really knows what has become of him. According to the Menshevik organ *Socialisticheski Vestnik* he has been sentenced by the OGPU to ten years' imprisonment.

<sup>22</sup> Official Bolshevik criticism attempts to estimate all works of literature by their value for the work of Socialist construction, and the execution of the General Line. But it would be a complete mistake to judge the productions of Bolshevik poets exclusively by the low level of Bolshevik criticism. There can be no question that the general revolution which the Bolshevik Government has produced has set in motion large sections of the population hitherto inert. But if it is easier for a gifted man to make his way, this advantage is offset by the regulation of the whole of life by a political and social philosophy officially imposed. Art also is exposed to censorship, moreover to a censorship which subjects a work of art to particular social requirements. We cannot deal here with the development of Russian literature under Bolshevik rule. We can only observe that the widespread belief in a connection between cubism and futurism and Bolshevism is untrue. If the poster art, represented, for example, by Maiakovsky, is, in spite of Lenin's aversion to it, particularly favoured by Bolshevism for its propaganda value, at bottom realism has a far greater affinity with it.

<sup>23</sup> This annexation of the entire life expresses the absolute value with which Bolshevism invests the political and social sphere. It attempts to carry this principle to its utmost consequences. It is in this that what is called its rationalism consists. Life must be so planned as to fulfil with the utmost possible perfection the laws which govern society.

#### PART IV. THE BOLSHEVIK PARTY

<sup>1</sup> The Left Communists once exercised a very strong influence in the Moscow Party organisation.

<sup>2</sup> This Commission of Control has been united with the so-called Workers' and Peasants' Inspection Bureau, the *Rabkrin*, so as to form one body for all practical purposes.

During the final period of his active life Lenin hoped that the Rabkrin would become a model body for the supervision of the entire state and party machinery. In his last works he recurs constantly to it. The following declaration in the draft (composed in December, 1922) of a speech never actually delivered is characteristic: 'The administrative machine—in general extraordinarily bad—more despicable than any bourgeois culture.' As regards the significance of Lenin's last measures and projects, which sought to change the Central Committee into a supreme party conference, meeting at regular intervals, and to enlarge the Commission of Control by from 75 to 100 new members, the interpretations put forward respectively by Stalin and the Opposition differ widely. Trotsky maintains that in the final period of his life Lenin had already perceived the danger of a Stalin dictatorship, and had even gone so far as to sever personal relations with Stalin.

When the struggle within the party arose, the Opposition was condemned to silence in face of the polemics directed against it, especially by Stalin. Its publications had to be printed abroad or illegally.

<sup>3</sup> Lenin had always rejected the view that the party should, like the Mensheviks, constitute so to speak, the sum-total of various fractions. The supporters of the General Line are therefore justified in appealing to his fundamental conception of the party against the demands of the Opposition for greater freedom of opinion. Lenin displayed his firm adherence to this view in his struggle with the workers' opposition in 1920-21.

<sup>4</sup> Lenin's speech of September 30, 1920, on the trade-union controversy places his attitude in a particularly clear light. In this speech he deliberately makes use of his enormous personal authority. Irony and firm determination are so skilfully combined that the demand for discipline and unity does not appear as excluding freedom of opinion in the governing bodies of the party. Unlike Lenin, Stalin seems completely to lack this gift of combining strict party discipline with discussions among the leaders. Yet Lenin's efforts to educate his party colleagues did not prevent him from adopting energetic measures against an opposition which he regarded as dangerous—for example, the Workers' Opposition in 1922.

<sup>5</sup> These conflicts of opinion between Lenin and Bucharin did not prevent their practical collaboration. Stalin did not give publicity to Bucharin's theoretical errors until he had decided to attack the so-called Right Opposition.

<sup>6</sup> All details of the activity and organisation of the Bolshevik Party is given periodically by the official journal, *Partynoe Stroitelstvo*, published in Moscow. 'Vor der Thermidor' (Hamburg, 1928), a book published by the Opposition Group, led by Sapronov and expelled from the party in 1927, throws considerable light on its internal organisation. The principal demand of the malcontents was that the activity of the secretaries outside the Central Committee should be stopped. They also complained of the party purges, which had become a weapon of conflict between sections of the party, and demanded that its officials should be paid from the members' subscriptions. We must not forget that expulsion from the party involves loss of civil and social rights.

<sup>7</sup> For expulsions from the party see Seibert, 'Red Russia' (London, 1932).

<sup>8</sup> This plan has determined the variations in the Bolshevik attitude towards the experts.

<sup>9</sup> There are many works dealing with Lenin. Of those published in English we may quote: L. Trotsky, 'Lenin,' London, 1925; G. Stalin, 'Leninism,' London, 1928; Fulop-Miller, 'Lenin and Gandhi,' London, 1929; Valerio Marcu, 'Lenin,' London, 1930. Information regarding all existing memoirs, letters, etc., dealing with Lenin, is supplied by the bibliographical survey 'Leniniana,' published periodically in Moscow since 1926, and the volumes of 'Leninskij Sbornik,' Moscow, since 1924. A special Lenin Institute has been founded in Moscow for the sole purpose of issuing all Lenin's works, and of preparing a fully detailed biography (which is still lacking). Of all the works hitherto published about Lenin, Trotsky's is certainly the most remarkable, in spite of its subjective treatment. It gives a real and vivid impression of Lenin's personality.

<sup>10</sup> See his brother's speech in his own defence. He there declares that he will find successors who will carry the revolution to victory.

<sup>11</sup> In a letter in which he expresses his disappointment,

Lenin writes. 'Youthful love has been taught a bitter lesson by the object of its love. No sentiment must enter into our dealings with our fellow men. A stone must always be kept in the pocket.' (Letter written September 2, 1900.)

<sup>12</sup> See Trotsky's autobiography, 'My Life,' London, 1930; Eastman, 'L. Trotsky. The Portrait of a Youth,' New York, 1925.

<sup>13</sup> In the works of Bystjansky and Leman-Pokrovsky against the Right Opposition, its members are accused of showing excessive favour to the Kulaks and seeking to delay the rate of industrialisation from fear of the present temper of the masses. In fact they are at bottom nothing but Agrarian Socialists.

<sup>14</sup> Sverdlov, Kalinin's predecessor as President of the all-Russian Executive Committee of Soviets, who died as early as 1919, deserves special mention. A man of Jewish extraction, he seems, like Dzerzhinsky, to have possessed a certain moral authority among his colleagues in virtue of his incorruptible honesty and his ruthlessness. Lenin prized his gifts as an organiser very highly indeed.

Jaroslavsky, the leader of the anti-religious campaign and censor of the party morals, is an extremely narrow-minded man. For example, he complains in his book that Lenin made use of such expressions as 'God grant,' 'Thank God.' He is among the organisers of the campaign of historical writing against the various oppositions.

A host of unflattering descriptions of the Bolshevik leaders is to be found in the writings of such ex-Bolsheviks as Solomon, Bessedovsky, and Dumbadse. The historian must utilise their verdicts with the same caution as the expressions of Byzantine adulation which are paid at present to Stalin, as they were formerly to Trotsky.

#### PART V. THE BOLSHEVIK CREED

<sup>1</sup> Here we must be content with observing that Bucharin's writings—for instance, his theory of historical materialism—are based on this doctrine of equilibrium. A conception of this kind has, of course, no connection with Hegel, but is determined by an agnostic positivism. It is a result of the adoption by Russian Socialists of the so-

called empirico-criticism of Mach-Avenarius. Of these the most prominent was Bogdanov, who before the war was for a time Lenin's principal opponent in the Bolshevik Party in the domain of theory. This point of view has determined the opinions of the so-called mechanists, who refuse to admit any distinctive object of philosophy. Lenin's main argument against Bucharin was that he adopted a purely abstract standpoint without regard to the concrete historical and social facts. In this connection it is worth remarking that Lenin was extremely sceptical in regard to the sociology for which Bucharin was so enthusiastic, with its universal laws of development. The widespread belief that revolutionary Marxism is particularly favourable to sociology is therefore true only with very considerable qualifications.

<sup>2</sup> These disputes fill the columns of the Bolshevik journals devoted to higher studies (for instance, the *Revolyucya i Kultura*). Controversy is conducted by charging one's opponent with disloyalty to the party and departure from the General Line, and reports of fighting on the philosophic front are published in which coalitions between the opposition groups are reported. Doborn is accused of under-estimating Lenin's philosophical originality and treating him as simply Plechanov's disciple.

<sup>3</sup> Plechanov also had once professed this point of view. But later, during the World War, he supported a war for the defence of the fatherland against German autocracy and became Lenin's keenest opponent.

<sup>4</sup> See the theses on the dictatorship of the proletariat reproduced on pp. 299 sq. Lenin denounced bourgeois democracy as deceiving the workers by its proclamation of a formal equality while retaining the slavery of capitalism.

<sup>5</sup> In Russia Lenin was sometimes spoken of as the heir of Bakunin and Chatchev, who advocated armed risings by small minorities. And Bolshevism was depicted as an alliance between the ragged proletariat and the soldiers longing for their discharge.

<sup>6</sup> It is clearly impossible to investigate here the dependence of Lenin's theories on Hilferding's 'Finanzkapital' and the differences between them, or to give an account of the Bolshevik polemic against Rosa Luxemburg's theory of imperialism. The political significance of the campaign



lay in the Bolshevik attempt to prove that revolutionary Socialism had the right to seize power in an economically undeveloped territory and that it was precisely such territories which must play the decisive part in the world revolution.

<sup>7</sup> Jakovlev, in his preface to Kotelnikov-Meller's book, compares the agrarian revolution of 1917-18 with the overthrow of the feudal system by the great French Revolution. Opposing theories of Bolshevik strategy can be distinguished by their respective conceptions of the relation between the bourgeois and proletarian revolutions.

<sup>8</sup> See Jaroslavsky, who has no hesitation in rejecting Hoglund's maxim: 'It comes to the same thing whether we are Socialists in the name of man or in the name of God.' In answer he appeals to Lenin's principle that atheist propaganda is inseparable from Bolshevik propaganda. Moreover, Lenin had attacked so-called religious Socialism with particular vehemence.

<sup>9</sup> Jaroslavsky distinguishes between the atheistic and rationalist propaganda of the bourgeois radicals and the anti-ecclesiastical class war represented by Bolshevik atheism

<sup>10</sup> Bolshevik answers to such questions as that of personal immortality never rise above the level of Jaroslavsky's. 'We workers have no use for an immortality of this kind (beyond the grave). Here on this earth we are able to create a life full of joys. The Communist finds the reward of his struggle in the transformation of human relationships which it effects.' Pokrovsky is content to derive religion from the fear of death. Lunatcharsky toys with conceptions of human self-deification. At the present time all religious questions are thrust into the background by the preoccupation with practical achievement, the social and economic changes to be effected.

#### PART VI. CRITICISM OF BOLSHEVISM

<sup>1</sup> Jaroslavsky, in his 'Party Ethics' ('O partethike,' Leningrad, 1925), maintains that moral conduct is identical with conduct that serves the interest of the proletariat

<sup>2</sup> In this connection Bolchakov's statement is important —

that the anti-religious propaganda in the villages has actually produced a revival of interest in religion. He describes the conditions in a particular district of Soviet Russia. There, he tells us, when the unbelievers attempt to disprove religion by scientific arguments and appeals to the mythical theory of religion and by showing the uselessness of priests, the peasants will reply: 'But the sects have no priests. And there are doctors and mathematicians who know all this quite as well as our friends of the Komsomol; but they believe in God all the same.' Bolchakov therefore recommends that anti-religious propaganda among the peasants should begin with the social relations of everyday life. If his account is correct—and he is himself of peasant origin—the peasants still maintain a traditional attitude towards religion. For example, if it is proposed to demolish a church, they will object that their grandfathers built it, and it is not therefore right to destroy it.

<sup>3</sup> These arguments were employed both against Trotsky and against Zinoviev-Kamenev and the Right Opposition.

<sup>4</sup> The necessity would seem to have already arisen. In his speech of June 23, 1931, Stalin demands an improvement in the standard of living.

<sup>5</sup> The decisive problem with which the Bolshevik industrial and economic construction is faced is the question whether it can contrive permanently to make technical and economic progress. The Bolshevik Government has clearly perceived the supreme importance of this problem. It stimulates by every means in its power the inventiveness of the workers. Unlike the capitalism of private enterprise the system of centrally organised industry has no interest in retaining methods of manufacture which can only be applied with much profit in isolated works. The private trade secret has been abolished; all trade secrets are now held by the state. Up to the present all important industrial and technical improvements made abroad have been adopted. This is particularly true of agriculture, which is being transformed by the adoption of the German system of manuring and American methods of farming. Contracts with private foreign experts for technical assistance are promoted and concluded as part of the Bolshevik programme.

The heavy hand of the central Government, and political terrorism are employed against neglect and disobedience. A particular industrial failure is not, indeed, as is theoretically the case under private capitalism, punished by the economic failure of the individual concerned, but by a moral and social control exercised by the masses. At the same time it is sought, particularly at the present time, to combine social activity with personal responsibility. The manager of a factory, for example, is responsible for the carrying out of plans. This combination, however, does not dispense with the aid of terrorist pressure by the central authorities.

Therefore the all-important question constantly recurs—whether the novel arrangement of industry has in fact provided the basis of the regular industrial activity it is intended to set going, or whether it has been successful only because the incalculable store of natural wealth hitherto unexploited and the strength of the political government, enjoying as it does a perfectly free hand, have made possible an industrial construction without regard to cost or sacrifice. In any case the history of the Bolshevik social and industrial achievement in Russia up to the present is a proof that attempts at a state-organised industry on a large scale are possible only in a state with a very strong government which moulds public opinion from above, and in this connection it makes no difference that appeal is made with or without justification to the will of the proletariat. Parliamentary democracy is incompatible with attempts to set up an industry organised by the state and to constitute an all-embracing industrial and economic unit.

<sup>6</sup> Lenin's entire theory of world revolution is determined by the belief that the imperialist powers are incapable of uniting. The entire foreign policy of the Soviet Union aims at exploiting this disunion. The proletarian state must be so strong economically and from the military point of view that intervention by foreign powers in the internal affairs of Russia is impossible, and the Soviet power must be a factor to be taken into account in any conflict between the powers. The boggy of foreign intervention is also put forward and maintained by the Bolsheviks for the purposes of their internal policy.

7 Unquestionably in its negative aspect Lenin's attitude is justified by the contradiction between the fiction of political equality and the existence of powerful and anonymous industrial bodies on whose fortunes the entire community is dependent. These bodies can no longer be regarded as private enterprises, since their failure threatens the foundations of the nation's entire life. The state-organised industry of Bolshevism strikes us as before anything else the expression of a powerful state which will tolerate no great industrial corporations as independent agents.

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